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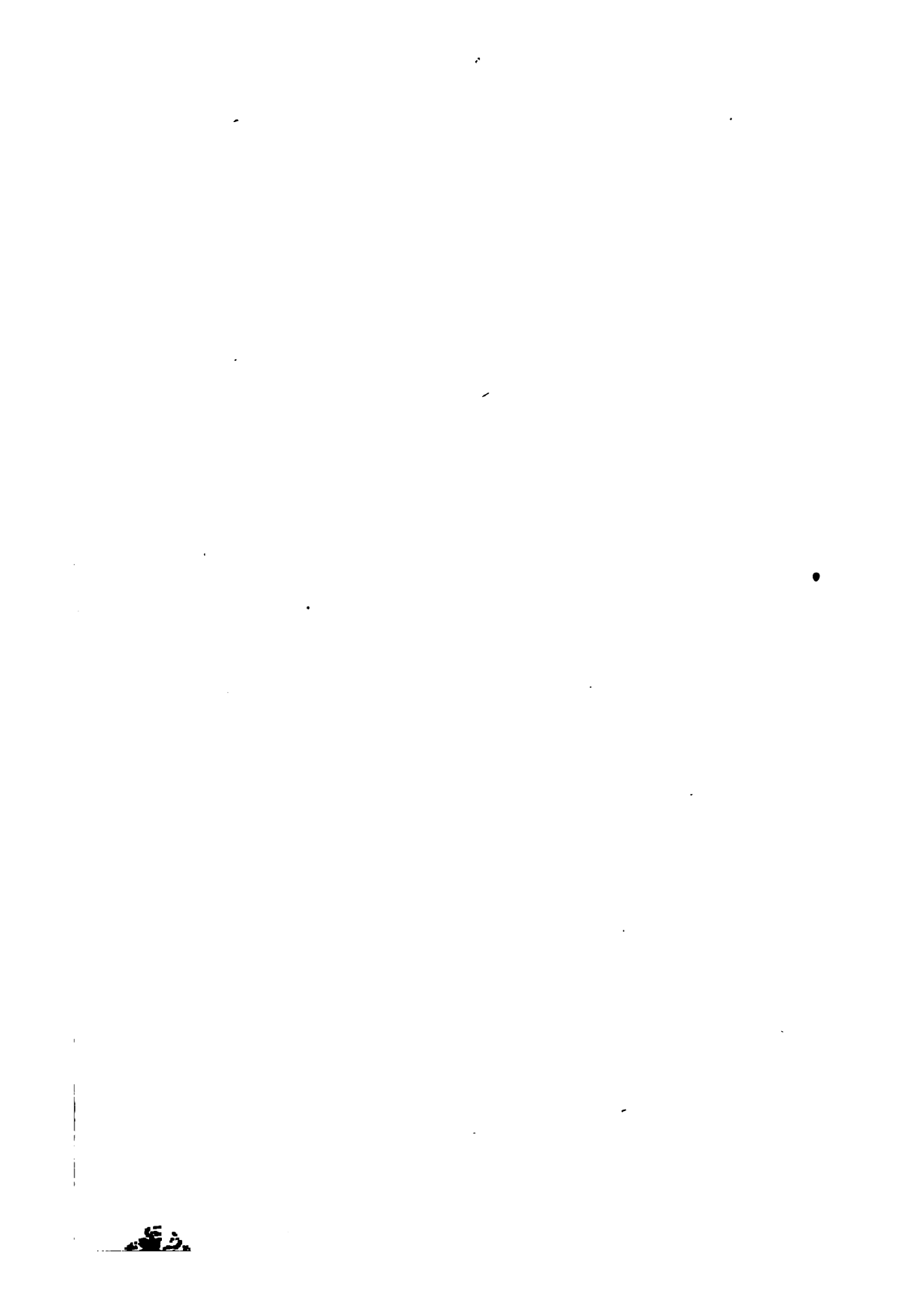
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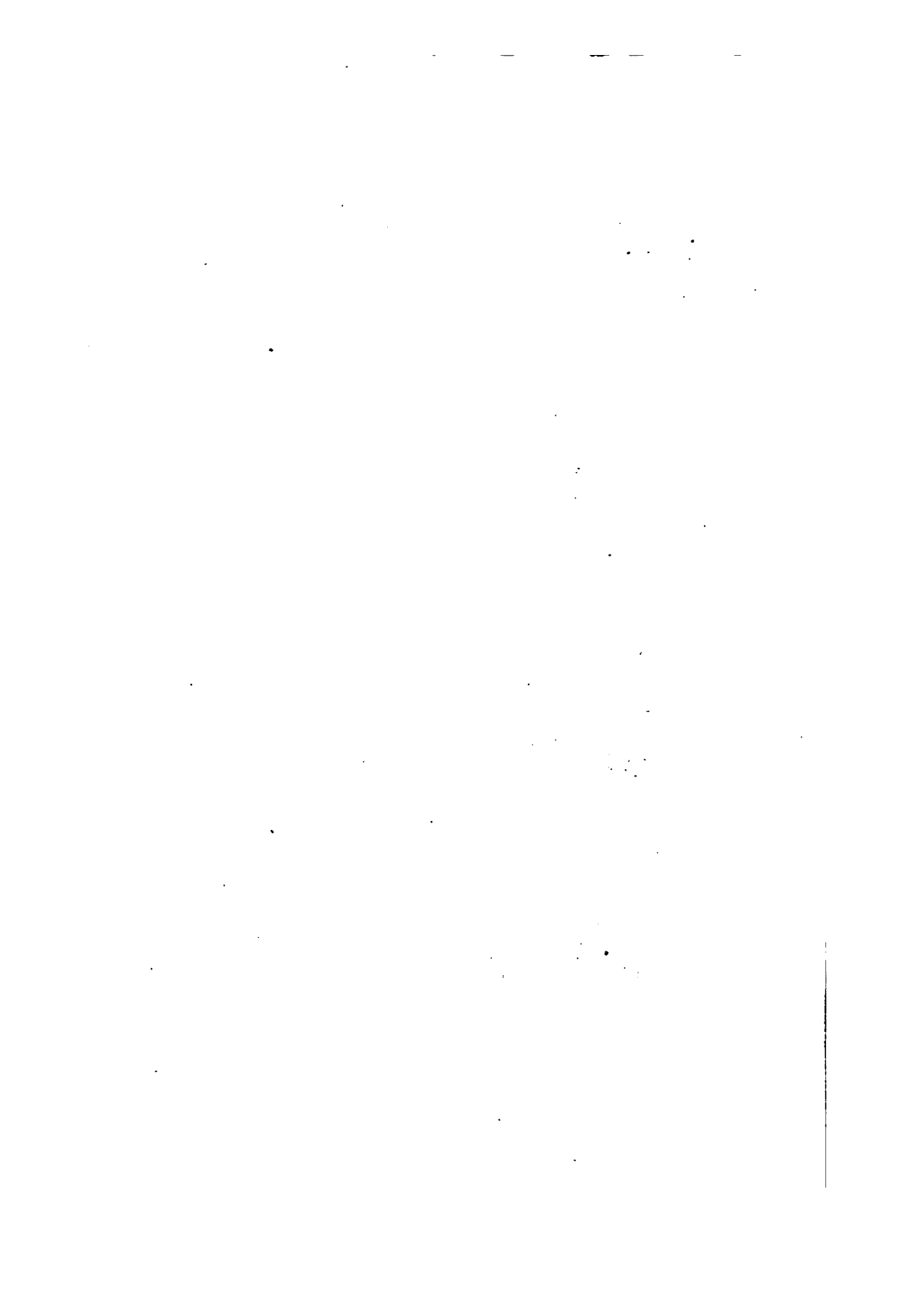


**SIR N. W. WRAXALL'S**  
**POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS**  
**OF HIS OWN TIME.**

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**VOL. II.**

LONDON:  
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MARY, DUCHESS OF RUTLAND.

*Engraved by W Read, from a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds*

# POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS

OF

## HIS OWN TIME.

BY

SIR N. W. WRAXALL, BART.

AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF MY OWN TIME."

IN THREE VOLUMES.



VOL. II.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,

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1836.





POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS  
OF MY OWN TIME.

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1786.

*January.* — Early in the month of January, Lord Macartney arrived in England from Calcutta. His return to Europe excited much surprise, he having been appointed, nearly twelve months before, to succeed Mr. Hastings as governor-general of Bengal, whenever the latter should quit India. But, notwithstanding this nomination, various weighty reasons precluded him from claiming the chair. His original appointment had not been carried at the East India House without great difficulty; the directors, in a pretty full court, being so equally balanced, that the question was decided in Lord Macartney's favour by only one vote. From Leadenhall-street it was therefore evident that he could not look for any steady or unanimous support. Nor had his public conduct in throw-

ing up the government of Fort St. George, rather than submit to execute the orders sent out by the board of control, tended to conciliate the protection of Dundas. In order to explain this last assertion, it is necessary to state that Mahommed Ally, Nabob or Sovereign of the Carnatic, was induced in the year 1781, when the armies of Hyder Ally had occupied and desolated his dominions, to assign over the administration of his revenues to the Madras government. So extraordinary a mark of confidence, by which he in fact made a temporary resignation of his political authority, transferring it to the East India Company's servants, was however given under a solemn engagement that his territories should be restored to him immediately after the termination of the war. Nevertheless, Lord Macartney, apprehensive lest the nabob's finances might be thrown into disorder under his own management, which must prevent his making the regular *kists* or payments due from him to the company, refused to restore the Carnatic to Mahommed Ally. That prince loudly complained of such an infraction of national faith, and reclaimed the interposition of the Bengal government. Hastings and the supreme council taking part with the nabob, enjoined Lord Macartney to fulfil the stipulations of 1781. But he remained inflexible, and waited orders from England. One of the first measures embraced by the new board

of control, after its institution in the autumn of 1784, was to send positive directions for restoring the assignment, and replacing Mahommed Ally in his rights of sovereignty. Lord Macartney, between whom and the nabob violent personal altercations had arisen, preferred resigning the government, rather than undergo the humiliation of compliance. With this determination he quitted Madras, and repaired to Calcutta, intending to prosecute his voyage from thence to England; wholly unprepared for the appointment which there awaited him, to succeed Hastings as governor-general.

It cannot be doubted that if his nomination had been legally complete, he would not have hesitated an instant to assume its functions. But the only title under which he could have demanded to be recognized, was evidently defective and invalid. The act of the legislature, passed in 1774, which erected a supreme controlling government in Bengal, expressly declared that on a vacancy occurring in the chair, the senior member of the council should succeed to it. This event had actually taken place on the 1st day of February 1785, when Mr. Hastings quitted the Ganges; and his office devolved, under a parliamentary authority, upon Mr. Macpherson. Until, therefore, he should be expressly superseded, and a successor appointed, no power could legally dispossess him. Of these facts Lord Macartney

was well aware; and though he might probably have been easily prevailed on to exercise the powers of governor-general, till more valid authority could arrive from Europe, yet he did not attempt to claim the office as his right. Still less did he make any demonstration of assuming it by force. If, indeed, he had taken any steps tending towards such an object, I know that he would have been instantly placed under arrest, conducted on board a ship, and sent to England. Mr. Macpherson having consulted the judges relative to the point, they unanimously declared that *he* was the only legal governor-general to whom obedience was due; and he consequently prepared, if it should become necessary, to maintain himself in his situation. But Lord Macartney, who knew the utter invalidity of his commission, was too wise to make any effort for gaining possession of the chair. He quitted Calcutta after a residence of a few days, and, immediately on his arrival in London, presented upon oath, at the East India House, an account of his acquisitions while he had remained at Madras. They were considered as very moderate, not exceeding, I believe, forty thousand pounds.

While speaking of Lord Macartney's visit to Calcutta, I have had occasion to mention Mr. Macpherson, who shortly after this time was created a baronet. He was born in the Isle of Skye, towards the close of the year 1744, and educated

at the University of Aberdeen ; where, as well as afterwards at that of Edinburgh, he early attained a knowledge of the great writings of antiquity. At the age of nearly twenty-three, impelled more by a desire of enlarging his mind, than by any determined plans of a pecuniary nature, he went out as a passenger on board an East Indiaman, commanded by his maternal uncle, Captain Macleod. He was, however, nominally registered on the ship's books as purser. Arriving in 1768, on the Malabar coast, where the company's forces were engaged at the siege of Mangalore, a town in the dominions of Hyder Ally ; he volunteered on the storming party, and was one of those who entered the fort when it was taken by assault. He possessed, indeed, and exhibited throughout his whole life, the most untentatious courage. While governor-general of Bengal, where his reductions, civil and military, excited numerous enemies, he displayed the utmost superiority to the attempts at intimidation made by various individuals, who supposed themselves aggrieved from the effect of his regulations. He manifested equal composure in Hyde Park, when one of those officers, Major Brown, called him out to answer with the pistol for acts performed reluctantly, under an imperious sense of duty, in his public character. Mr. Macpherson first became known to the Nabob of the Carnatic in 1769, who was early impressed with the eleva-

tion of his sentiments, his apparent superiority to money, and the conciliation of his manners. But he united to them a deep, comprehensive, abstract mind, under the control of a philosophic temper, scarcely to be ruffled by passion. Desire of fame, and the ambition of meriting it by personal sacrifices and renunciations, formed the master-spring of all his actions. If any quality pre-eminently characterized him, it was patience; one of the rarest gifts of Nature to man, and one which he seemed to exert without an effort.

His person was cast in a Herculean mould; for he rose to above six feet in height, well-proportioned, athletic, neither too slender, nor at all corpulent; active, elastic in the dance, and performing a *strathspey* at seventy almost like a youth of eighteen. His features, regular, pleasing, and expressive, were always illuminated by good-humour, or enlivened by gaiety. I never saw him manifest dejection, though I have beheld him in situations which might have oppressed the firmest mind. The "*mens immota manet*" of Virgil applied peculiarly to him. So did not less the "*lacrymæ voluntur inanes*," which I have seen him shed on more than one occasion. His accomplishments at least equalled his endowments; and his conversation was enriched by anecdotes gathered from Europe, as well as from Asia. Convivial, formed for society, master of French and Italian, singing with ease and grace

the airs of almost every nation, he chained his guests to the table. Those, and those only, who have heard him sing Don Gaston de Cogollos's Spanish song, which Gil Blas overhears when a prisoner in the Castle of Segovia, beginning,

"Ay de me ! un anno felice  
Parece un soplo ligero,"

can form an estimate of his powers. Nor was his talent limited to one language. Venetian, Hindoo, French, but, above all, Highland ballads, he gave with the same facility. Never did any man display more unaffected hospitality. It was only eclipsed by his liberality ;—for his purse had unfortunately no strings, and was open to every applicant, of every country, who besought his aid, or touched his compassion. I used to reproach him with his resemblance to *Timon*. But he did not finish, like *Timon*, by misanthropy, though he met perhaps with as strong causes for shutting his door against mankind, as could have been produced by the profuse Athenian.

There still remain various touches to be added to this portrait. Macpherson was a poet of no common order. His "Tears of Sedition for the Death of *Junius*," written in 1769, and printed in some editions of "*Junius's Letters*," are most classic lines. So are his verses addressed to the three daughters of Mr. Coutts, the eminent banker, composed in 1791, at Ovid's tomb, not far from Rome. His manners were the more ingratiating,



because they formed a contrast with his person. If his figure reminded of Hercules, it was Hercules in the court of Omphalé, gentle, subdued, and disarmed. Who can wonder that such talents should raise their possessor to eminence? Mahomed Ally adopted him for his *son*, and entrusted to his vigilance the dearest interests of the Carnatic. Plundered and oppressed by successive governors of Fort St. George, the nabob had no other chance of redress, than by committing his rights to the care of a faithful, judicious, indefatigable agent. While employed in fulfilling the duties of his charge, which brought him into communication and contact with ministers; Lord North, then at the head of his majesty's councils, conceived so favourable an opinion of his abilities and powers of conciliation, that he determined to avail himself of them, for the service of the state.

Early in 1781, Macpherson, recently named by ministerial recommendation a member of the supreme council, was sent out to Bengal; expressly charged by Lord North, to exert his utmost endeavours for restoring general peace throughout India, and concord in our own internal administration at Calcutta. He fulfilled every expectation, and even surpassed the hopes entertained from his exertions. During nearly three years and a half that he continued to act under Hastings, he had the address to retain the governor-general's confidence, without sacri-

ficing either his own opinions on questions of public policy, or the interests of the East India Company. He achieved even a more difficult task, that of acquiring *Mrs.* Hastings's regard, though he opposed her wishes or views on more than one occasion. The moderation of his character, which always inclined him to adopt healing, economical, and pacific measures, formed a most beneficial counterpoise to the enterprising and ambitious spirit of Hastings. Both possessed elevated minds, and both aspired to acquire fame; but, through different, or opposite channels. The one, by enlarging and extending the British dominions in India: the other, by confirming their power, restoring the company's finances, and retrieving their credit, convulsed by a long period of hostility. To Macpherson, Hastings ultimately resigned his authority, which the former continued to exercise during above nineteen months, till he was superseded by Earl Cornwallis.

Soon after Sir John Macpherson's return from Bengal, the Prince of Wales commenced an intimacy with him, which lasted above fourteen years, from 1788 down to 1802, when it became suddenly eclipsed, and never revived. During that time, few individuals enjoyed more distinguishing marks of his royal highness's favour. Sir John communicated constantly with him by letter, while travelling on the Continent. When in London, he was admitted to Carlton House at

almost all hours, frequently when the heir-apparent was in bed. I have dined various times in company with the Prince, at Sir John's house at Brompton, between 1797 and 1800. Towards the close of 1789, Macpherson had visited Italy. While resident at Pisa, early in the following year, the Cardinal de Lomenie, ex-minister of Louis the Sixteenth, who had taken refuge in that city, mentioned with such eulogiums, to Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, Sir John's financial measures, adopted as governor-general, for sustaining the East India Company's credit in Bengal, that Leopold determined to make his acquaintance. Dismissing all form, and accompanied only by a single attendant, he repaired on foot to Macpherson's lodgings, and announced himself. He very soon afterwards succeeded his brother Joseph, as King of Hungary and Bohemia; to which was added the imperial crown of Germany, in the autumn of the same year 1790. During his short reign of scarcely two years, Sir John accompanied or met him by his own desire wherever he moved; at Venice, Milan, Florence, and Vienna. Leopold confided in, and consulted him on points of the most important nature. Previous, as well as subsequent to that sovereign's decease, he rendered himself equally acceptable to Frederic William the Second, King of Prussia, who lived with him in constant intercourse.

*24th January.*—Never, at any period of George the Third's reign, has the session of parliament been opened in a more triumphant manner than it was by Pitt in 1786. Fox, though he spoke on the occasion at great length, and with greater ability; though he inveighed against the speech from the throne, both for its assertions on some points, and for its silence on others; yet, conscious how large a majority would support the administration, did not attempt a division. Nevertheless, many circumstances rendered the day interesting, as well as important. On that evening, first presented himself to public notice an individual who has since very inadequately filled, during more than three years, the highest offices in the state, in peace as well as in war; at the head of the treasury, and of the exchequer:—an individual who, at the hour when I write, occupies the post of secretary of state for the home department. I allude to Mr. Addington, subsequently created Viscount Sidmouth. Pitt had selected him for seconding the address to the crown; an act which he performed with great propriety, in language of elegance, and not destitute of grace and dignity. The panegyrics on the minister which he intermingled with his speech might well be excused, as the tribute of friendship, if not of justice. Addington, who was at this time about thirty years of age, originally came into parliament at the general election in 1784, as member

for Devizes. His person was tall and well-proportioned, his countenance pleasing, his features fine, and his manners mild, calm, grave, calculated to conciliate mankind. Neither his descent nor his connexions were illustrious. Dr. Anthony Addington, whose eldest son he was, practised medicine during many years at Reading in Berkshire, and acquired by his profession an ample fortune. He was considered as particularly skilful in cases of insanity, to which branch of the art he applied himself: but the circumstance to which his family may be said primarily to owe their actual elevation, was his having attended the first Mr. Pitt in a medical capacity. Their two sons became early known to each other; and it is generally supposed that the member for Devizes received a hint from his friend the first minister, to keep his eye fixed on the speaker's chair, as an object of ambition well worthy his attainment; in which seat, time, aided by conjunctures, might probably place him. He was, in truth, admirably qualified for that eminent and dignified situation; the duties of which, no individual during the present reign has fulfilled with more ability, impartiality, and general approbation, not excepting even the late speaker, now Lord Colchester.

Perhaps it might have conduced to his reputation as a public man, without materially injuring his fortune in the most extensive sense, if he

had limited his desires to that eminence, which invariably conducts its possessor, after the lapse of some years, to a seat in the upper house: for Cornwall only lost it by death. Onslow, Cust, Norton, Grenville, Mitford, and Abbott have all become peers. So would Addington, in the ordinary course of events. But his majesty, on Pitt's resignation, early in 1801, having offered him the vacant places at the head of the treasury and the exchequer, he had not resolution sufficient to decline so tempting a proposition. No sooner had the king made this selection, than he was seized with a privation of intellect, nearly similar, in violence and in duration, to his memorable attack in 1788. Addington's appointment not having previously gone through the requisite forms, Pitt, though no longer in office, was under the necessity of performing the ministerial functions during a considerable time, in the house of commons. Many people indeed thought that the reasoning faculties of the sovereign must have been impaired, if not wholly obscured, *before* he could have substituted Addington in Pitt's office. The experiment only served to prove that an excellent *speaker* of the house of commons may make a very inadequate and incapable *first minister*. It answered indeed the sovereign's purpose, by gently transferring the government to a man from whom he might confidently expect much more acquiescence and sub-

mission than he had found in Pitt ; while Addington's political opinions were well known to be nearly or altogether similar with those of his predecessor. But the country looked in vain to the son of the Reading physician, transformed by the royal touch into a first lord of the treasury, for the endowments which met in the son of the Earl of Chatham. Not that Addington wanted talents which in ordinary times might have sufficed to sustain him in his employment. He was indeed wholly uninformed upon foreign affairs, having never visited the Continent, nor studied its interests, courts, and principal objects of attention. His mind did not readily embrace those points of policy ; verifying the observation of *Valentine*, in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," when he says,

"Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits."

But, on the other hand, he displayed a competent knowledge of finance ; spoke on all occasions, and on every subject, from the treasury bench, with perspicuity and facility ; applied closely to official business, and acquired some transitory popularity among those who did not look below the surface, by making peace with France, a few months after he came into power. These commencements were nevertheless speedily obliterated by other occurrences. It was soon ascertained that no treaty could bind a revolutionary nation, propelled by the energies of a military chief armed

with despotie authority, whose principles were adverse to the repose and felicity of Europe, as well as to the independence of all other governments. War recommenced early in 1803. During about thirteen or fourteen months, which elapsed while Addington still remained at the head of his majesty's councils, his eyes were invariably, and I had almost said, exclusively, directed towards the harbour of Boulogne. From that newly-constructed port and Vimereux, where Bonaparte had ostentatiously accumulated every sort of naval and military preparation for a descent on our shores, the English minister appeared to dread the most calamitous results, notwithstanding the Martello towers with which his predecessor had covered the beach, from Dungeness to Folkstone. Every gun-boat terrified him, which ventured out from under the protection of the French batteries; and the occasional capture of one of these vehicles for transporting the vengeance of the Corsican consul to the Kentish coast, diffused more satisfaction in Downing-street, than could have been produced by a victory obtained in any other quarter.

While, nevertheless, Pitt continued ostensibly to sustain the administration, or even to contemplate the state of public affairs with apparent indifference, the spell endured. But, no sooner did the ex-minister become thoroughly weary of passing his time in seclusion, with Lady Hester Stan-



hope, at Walmer Castle; occupied all day, as he was, in the ungrateful task of disciplining and drilling refractory Cinque Port volunteers, or looking through his telescope at the batteries along the French coast;—no sooner did he signify, by means of confidential adherents in both houses of parliament, his wish to resume his ancient place in the cabinet, than Addington's power instantly dissolved like a dream. Pitt, compared by one of his noble followers to "a giant refreshed," took possession of the government, as if it had been his patrimony and his birth-right. Richard Cromwell, when deprived of the protectorate in 1659 by the cabal of Wallingford House, did not oppose less resistance to the mandate which reduced him to the condition of a private citizen, than was exhibited by Addington in 1804. Pitt rewarded him for this prompt submission, by raising him to the peerage, about seven months afterwards. If public opinion had sustained his administration, it could not have been thus extinguished. But he wanted not only the talents; he wanted likewise Pitt's elevation of mind, and superiority to feelings of self-interest, which he exhibited when he refused to confer upon himself the clerkship of the pells, and bestowed it upon Barré. Addington acted otherwise, and when the office became again vacant, he took possession of it in his son's name. This conduct, however natural and venial, yet

produced an unfavourable impression throughout the country. After quitting the post of first minister, and passing a considerable time out of office, followed by very few adherents, he has again re-appeared on the political theatre, in a subordinate situation. So that *him* may be applied Juvenal's remark, when (speaking of the change effected in the Roman people) he says,

———"Qui dabat olim  
Imperium, fasces, legiones, omnia, nunc se  
Continet."——

Perhaps I might add with the satirist,

———"atque duas tantum res anxius optat,"

an earldom, and a pension.

Eden made a figure not less conspicuous than Addington, on the first day of the session, though of a very different description. It was commonly asserted and believed, that Eden had stipulated with the minister, as a secret article of the bargain between them, for permission to absent himself from the house, at the opening of parliament. But, Dundas having been informed that Eden, in the circular letter addressed to his former associates, had said, "Though, for the reasons assigned, I have accepted a mission from Mr. Pitt, yet I shall always retain my attachment to my old political friends;" determined not to allow him to set off for Paris, without his previously exhibiting himself as a supporter of government in the front rank. Notwithstanding his repugnance, he

attended, and was placed on the treasury bench, between the chancellor of the exchequer and the treasurer of the navy. There I beheld him, exposed as in a political pillory, during many hours, to the gaze, and indeed, to the pelting of his quondam opposition companions. All eyes were directed towards him; while those whom he had joined, and those whom he had deserted, seemed equally to enjoy his distress. His countenance, naturally pale, but rendered more so by his situation, bore eloquent testimony to the feelings which agitated him. Lord Surrey began the attack, with more address than was usually exhibited by him, to whom Fox generally delegated such parliamentary commissions as required little delicacy or circumlocution. After inveighing against the ministerial profusion on various points, and demanding "whether the appointment of two ambassadors at Paris with separate establishments, was to be regarded as a test of the economy of administration;" he added, "Possibly, however, the gentleman who is recently appointed to fill one of those posts, may convince me of my error in thinking such a double nomination neither necessary, nor economical. *I do not see him in his place,*" continued Lord Surrey, affecting to look round for Eden among the minority members near him, while loud and general laughter pervaded the assembly. "Perhaps too," subjoined he, "the same gentleman will inform us

that he has been furnished with *reasons* for inducing *him* to place confidence in those very ministers, for withholding from whom my good opinion, he has furnished *me* at different times with so many excellent reasons."

Fox entered more pointedly into the subject. After denying that any necessity existed for appointing a person to negotiate the projected commercial treaty with France, whose rank in life rendered it unbecoming for him to act in a subordinate capacity; he proceeded to animadvert personally on Eden's defection. "The minister," observed Fox, "has unquestionably called to his assistance, a gentleman who is somewhat better informed in matters of commerce, than he is himself. Of that truth, the experience of the last session has pretty well convinced him. Let him not however exult too much in having acquired such an ally, or trust too implicitly to his adherence, if the assertions contained in his own letters spoke his real sentiments! He has quitted a connexion, of whose principles he has repeatedly expressed his warmest approbation, in order to join a party, whose continuance in office he has by his votes in this house declared to be dangerous to the existence of the constitution." Words more contumelious could not easily be furnished by the English language. Nor did Pitt attempt any defence of his new auxiliary, though he justified the measure of sending him over to France,

for the purpose of negotiating a commercial treaty ; as well as the specific selection of Eden, who was eminently qualified to effect so great and salutary a national work. Eden himself remained speechless. He excited compassion : but, his family, which was large, (while his income consisted principally, if not wholly, in pensions issuing out of the exchequer,) compelled him to bring his talents to the ministerial market. After undergoing so painful and public an exposure, he was permitted to set out for Paris, without entering a second time the house of commons.

Among the individuals of high rank, who, during the first weeks of Pitt's administration, had obtained considerable appointments from the crown, might justly be reckoned the Earl of Chesterfield. Early in 1784 he was named ambassador to the court of Madrid, for which place he soon afterwards ostensibly set out, accompanied by his relative, Mr. Arthur Stanhope, nominated secretary to the embassy. But, like *Montauciel* in the " *Déserteur*," who, with all his efforts, could never raise the brandy-bottle above his mouth ; so, Lord Chesterfield and his secretary, though they reached Paris, proceeded to Marseilles, and loitered for a long time on the shore of the Mediterranean, where they seemed to amuse themselves very well at the national expence ; yet never could reach the Pyrenees, or set

foot on the Spanish territory. Such a waste of the public money necessarily excited animadversion. The Earl of Surrey, on the day when parliament met, sternly demanded of the minister, "whether the maintenance of an expensive embassy to Madrid for two years past, during all which period of time it was notorious that the nobleman named to that high situation had never approached the frontiers of Spain, constituted a proof of the economy of administration?" Pitt, though he replied at great length to many of the accusations contained in Fox's speech, yet, whether from inadvertence, or from intention, I cannot say, took no notice of Lord Surrey's charge. But Martin, member for Tewksbury, than whom a more incorrupt man did not sit in the house of commons; and who commonly supported Pitt, not from views of interest, or of ambition, or of party; impelled by public principle alone; rose towards the close of the debate. In few and simple words he expressed his concern, no less than his surprize, that a ministry of whom he had entertained so high an opinion, should, in the instance pointed out by Lord Surrey, commit so flagrant a breach of economy. The chancellor of the exchequer immediately came forward, and offered his reasons for the measure; prefacing them with some very flattering expressions to Martin himself. "The salary," he said, "had been allowed to the nobleman in question,

from a motive of policy, because, at the time when he was appointed, an ambassador was expected to arrive here from Spain. But, as that expectation had not been realized, his majesty, approving, as he did, of Lord Chesterfield's conduct, nevertheless had ordered his immediate return to England." Pitt's excuse was admitted, and the embassy terminated; more beneficially indeed to the noble functionary than to the nation, he having received his ample appointments for two years, accompanied by other customary gratifications, without performing any diplomatic act.

Lord Chesterfield was collaterally related to the celebrated earl, so well known in the reigns of the first two princes of the Brunswick line, respecting which nobleman Dr. Johnson observed, that "he was a lord among wits, and a wit among lords." His successor did not inherit either the brilliant parts or the parliamentary abilities of that eminent person; but he, nevertheless, possessed considerable talents, heightened by pleasing, lively manners. To the king he rendered himself peculiarly acceptable, and few men about the court enjoyed more frequent or familiar colloquial intercourse with his sovereign. In order to avail himself of this distinction, and the effects which might naturally be expected to result from it, he renounced, during many years, his paternal seat of Bretby, in the county of Derby, and hired a place at Bayley's,

near Salthill, within three or four miles of Windsor. His attentions were not lavished on an ungrateful master. The *garter*, the post of master of the horse, and other offices, successively conferred on him, formed sufficient evidences of royal predilection. Towards the concluding years of his life, after his majesty's last attack of intellectual malady in 1810, Lord Chesterfield quitted Bayley's, withdrew to Bretby, and occupied himself till his decease in embellishing that classic residence of the Stanhopes, commemorated in such entertaining terms by *Grammont*. His career would have been, on the whole, rather distinguished than otherwise, if the circumstance of criminally prosecuting his *tutor*, and the degree of commiseration excited by Dodd's ignominious end, however deserved it might be, had not operated to the disadvantage of the *pupil*. It was thought indicative of too severe or unfeeling a disposition, at two-and-twenty, to surrender a clergyman, connected by such ties, to the public executioner. Such continues even at present to be the common sentiment of mankind respecting that transaction. The late Earl of Berkeley, having either wounded or killed more than one highwayman who attempted to rob him when travelling, Lord Chesterfield jocosely said to him in conversation, "Berkeley, when did you last dispatch a highwayman?"—"Chesterfield," replied he, "how long is it since you hung a parson?" Here the dialogue ceased. The late



Earl of Sandwich, who died in 1814, recounted to me this anecdote, which he received from Lord Berkeley himself.

With Dodd I was well acquainted. Some time during the month of November 1776, dining at the house of Messrs. Dilly, the booksellers, not far from the Mansion House, who were accustomed frequently to entertain men of letters at their table, I there found myself seated very unworthily among several distinguished individuals. Wilkes, Jones, afterwards so well known as Sir William Jones, De Lolme, Dr. Dodd, with three or four others, composed the company. We were gay, animated, and convivial. Before we parted, Dodd invited us to a dinner at his residence in Argyle-street. A day was named, and all promised to attend. When we broke up, Dr. Dodd, who had shewn me many civilities during the evening, offered to set me down at the west end of the town, adding that his own carriage was waiting at the door. I readily accepted the proposal, and he carried me back to the St. James's Coffee-house. The company accordingly met again on the evening fixed, when a very elegant repast was served, with French wines of various kinds. Mrs. Dodd presided, and afterwards received in her drawing-room a large party of both sexes. Dodd was a plausible, agreeable man; lively, entertaining, well-informed, and communicative in conversation. While in prison, he wrote to me, urgently

requesting my exertions with the late Lord Nugent to procure his pardon. If it could have been extended to him, without producing by the precedent incalculable injury to society, his majesty would undoubtedly have exercised in *his* case the prerogative of mercy. He felt the strongest impulse to save Dodd, not only on account of the numerous and powerful applications made in his favour, but as a clergyman who had been one of his own chaplains. The Earl of Mansfield, however, prevented so pernicious an act of grace. I have heard Lord Sackville recount the circumstances that took place in the council held on the occasion, at which the king assisted. To the firmness of the lord chief-justice, Dodd's execution was due: for, no sooner had he pronounced his decided opinion that no mercy ought to be extended, than the king, taking up the pen, signed the death-warrant. He died penitent and pusillanimous. The weather on the 27th of June 1777, when he suffered, was most variable, changing perpetually from bright sunshine to heavy storms of rain; during one of which latter pelting showers he was turned off at Tyburn. His body, conveyed to a house in the city of London, underwent every scientific professional operation which, it was hoped, might restore animation. Pott, the celebrated surgeon, was present to direct them. There were even found persons sufficiently credulous to believe that Dodd had been resuscitated, and pri-

vately transported to Aix in Provence. Lord Chesterfield never altogether surmounted the unfavourable impression produced by the prominent share which he took in Dodd's prosecution, though time obliterated it in a certain degree.

Towards the close of the day when parliament met, Major Scott reminded Burke of the engagement into which he had entered before the termination of the last session, to bring forward his charges against Hastings. Scott added, that it was incumbent on him to state at what time he intended to proceed, *if he meant to proceed at all*, as the late governor-general felt the utmost anxiety for dispatch. Before Burke could answer, Fox, presenting himself to the Speaker's notice, observed, that if his friend should so entirely forget his duty (which, at the same time, he was far from supposing) as to neglect accomplishing his promise, others would be found in that assembly disposed to bring the business under discussion. Burke declined pledging himself to any particular day or time, justifying his silence on the point by citing the great Duke of Parma's memorable reply, who, when pressed by Henry the Fourth to fix a day for a general action, answered that "he had not come so far in order to learn from his enemy the proper place or occasion for giving battle." It seemed by this ambiguous or evasive expression as if Burke had not altogether expected to be thus summoned; since more than seven months of par-

liamentary leisure which he had enjoyed subsequent to Hastings's return, might naturally have enabled him instantly to commence his proceedings. Whether such was the fact or not, I know that many of the governor-general's wisest friends censured the conduct of his agent. They thought a negative triumph might have sufficed, under all the circumstances of Hastings's position, without seeking the enemy, insulting, and defying him. If, when so challenged, Burke had refused to prove his assertions, he must have been stigmatized as a calumniator. No alternative, therefore, was left him, except to undertake the painful office of an accuser. These reflections, however natural or judicious they might be, made little impression on a man who, conscious of the general rectitude of his intentions while administering the East India Company's affairs on the banks of the Ganges, erroneously conceived that party would respect him on his revisiting England. Hastings relied for security, if not for recompense, on three foundations, all of which proved totally without solidity. The first was, his public services; the next, royal favour; and the last was, ministerial support.

Unquestionably Hastings merited highly of the East India Company, and consequently of the nation, in his public character. Nor were either the directors, or the proprietors, insensible to his great services. But *they* viewed his administration through a political medium, while *Burke* held it

up to a moral standard. Utility and revenue formed the principal criterion of right and wrong in Leadenhall-street. At Westminster, respect for every right, nay, even prejudice, of the Oriental princes and people ; renunciation of all attempt to levy forced contributions from them, even when the preservation of the British territories seemed most urgently to demand it ;—such were the rules of action by which his accusers tried the governor-general. He never appeared to comprehend thoroughly his situation. Yet all history, antient as well as modern, might have shewn him, that under popular governments, the most resplendent public services have almost invariably conducted to prosecution and punishment. If he opened the page of Grecian story, with which he was familiar, he must have seen the conqueror of Marathon accused by Xantippus, and expiring of his wounds in prison, under the weight of a heavy pecuniary fine which he was unable to pay ; imposed by the very people, in their legislative capacity, whom he had rescued from foreign invasion and slavery. Themistocles, who may be said to have *twice* saved the Athenians ; on both elements, at Plataea, as well as at Salamis ; scarcely experienced a better treatment than Miltiades, and died in exile.

Rome, while she continued free, and consequently liable to become the prey of contending parties, like every state possessing liberty ; offered, in the person of the first Scipio Africanus, a pro-

tototype of Hastings's own fate. That illustrious general, who vanquished Hannibal at Zama, was juridically attacked on his return to Italy ; or, in modern language, he was impeached. The elder Cato persecuted him, precisely as Burke did Hastings. The two *Petili*, tribunes of the people, performed the same part as Fox and Sheridan did among *us*. Scipio was by them accused of extortion exercised against Antiochus king of Syria, nearly as Hastings was charged with acting towards Cheyt Sing and the Princesses of Oude. So great a similarity is there in all the events of history, through every period of time. Even from the instance of Lord Clive, Hastings might have learned to deprecate and dread a parliamentary enquiry. The conqueror of Plassey, who subjected to Great Britain the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, very narrowly escaped punishment ; and *his* services were military, performed principally in the field. Those of the governor-general were executed only in his civil capacity, which he likewise in some measure divided with the members of the Supreme Council ; consequently they did not make the same forcible appeal to national gratitude which victories produce. These reflections should have induced him to adopt a defensive line of conduct, whereas he in some measure provoked a prosecution.

If his services to the state, and their operation on the public mind, could not secure him from

impeachment, or enable him triumphantly to repel his accusers; still less could he calculate on the effects of royal favour, for extrication. That his majesty considered him as a man who had merited highly of his country, and of the crown, is indisputable. I know that the king, down to his final loss of reason in 1810, expressed himself in those terms respecting Hastings, and always spoke of him as the worst-used subject in his dominions. But George the Third could extend no protection to a man impeached by the commons of Great Britain. *Previous* indeed to their vote, he might prolong the conversation with Hastings at a levee, as her majesty might distinguish Mrs. Hastings at the drawing-room; but, *subsequently*, he could not even appear in the royal presence at St. James's. Nor did the king possess any such control over Pitt, as at other periods of his reign he exercised over other ministers. The Earl of Bute was a favourite, not a statesman. Lord North stood in a more confidential and intimate relation to the sovereign, than Pitt; who was elevated to his office as much by the national voice, as by his majesty's preference. Addington, I readily admit, who was substituted in Pitt's place entirely by royal selection, and maintained in it by the same power, could not with impunity have opposed the determined wishes of the crown.

Other reasons likewise existed, which might

impose a restraint on George the Third. It was well known that the late governor-general and Mrs. Hastings had presented him, or the queen, with many valuable articles brought from the East; principally, precious stones. The *ivory bed* had been commemorated in the "Rolliad." Some obloquy attached itself to these splendid offerings of Oriental respect. In the spring of the year 1786, a man attracted attention, who possessed the extraordinary faculty of masticating and swallowing stones. He lodged in Cockspur-street, where I saw him perform the act with apparent facility. He was commonly denominated "the miraculous stone-eater." Hastings's enemies caused a caricature to be struck, and sold in the print-shops of the metropolis, where the king was represented in the Asiatic costume of the Great Mogul, a turban encircling his head. His mouth was wide open, and opposite stood Hastings, with a large bulse of diamonds in his hand, which he threw, one by one, into the royal jaws. Underneath was inscribed, "The miraculous stone-eater," and no person could mistake the two figures. This fact sufficiently proves how impossible it would have been for his majesty to manifest any strong interest in Hastings's affairs, without exciting severe comments.

Least of all ought Hastings to have nourished any expectations of ministerial protection. The chancellor, it is true, expressed the highest opi-



nion of his services, accompanied with corresponding testimonies of contempt or reprobation for the printed *reports*, as well as for the personal attacks made on him in the house of commons. But these ebullitions of Lord Thurlow's gloomy indignation, which evaporated in words, only stimulated the leaders of opposition to more strenuous exertions, by augmenting their animosity. In the first Earl of Mansfield, and the Archbishop of York, (Markham,) Mr. Hastings could likewise boast of two friends. He had indeed conferred the office of resident at Benares on one of the archbishop's sons; a circumstance to which most invidious allusion is made in the "Pindaric" assigned to Dr. Markham, by the author of the "Probationary Odes;" where, describing "the bark, rich with Indian spoils," on board which the governor-general embarked for Europe, he exclaims,

"O! to Britannia's shore  
In safety waft, ye winds, the precious freight!  
'Tis Hastings; of the prostrate East  
Despotic arbiter; whose bounty gave  
My Markham's delegated rule  
To riot in the plunder of Benares!"——

——"Soon may I greet the morn,  
When, Hastings screen'd, Dundas and George's name  
Thro' Bishopsthorpe's glad roofs shall sound!"

Jenkinson, too, I admit, might be numbered among the governor-general's supporters. But *his* reign had nearly terminated, and the time

was gone by when his opinion could almost sway a majority in the house. Whatever accusations of submission to secret influence the members of opposition might find it convenient to throw out against Pitt, he was not, like Lord North, of a temper or character to suffer a controlling power between himself and the throne. Pitt well knew how to appreciate the service which he had rendered to the king, in preventing the *coalition* from putting on him a political strait-waistcoat. Jenkinson therefore in 1786, if he had not sunk to the level of an ordinary privy counsellor, yet no longer exercised the mysterious power attributed to him during the American war. Besides, he had already one foot in the house of peers, and only waited for the conclusion of the session, to be removed from his present situation to a more dignified rank. The fact was so universally known, that Fox did not hesitate in alluding to it, during the course of debate. Speaking of Jenkinson, just about this time,—I believe it happened early in February, on the discussion of a militia question,—Fox described him as “a person high in the minister’s confidence, who *still* remained a member of that house, but who, if universal report might warrant belief, would shortly leave it, in order to *grace* another assembly.” All eyes were directed towards Jenkinson. He necessarily felt how deep a stake depended; and he was too wise to risk

a shipwreck, by any act of imprudence, at a moment when he had nearly accomplished the great object of his ambition. Hastings could not reasonably look for any efficient assistance from that quarter.

Pitt himself unquestionably owed to Hastings's friends the deepest obligations. They had joined him when struggling against Fox's majority; and to the *Bengal squad*, opposition reproached the minister with subservience on every occasion. But he had now emancipated himself from those fetters, and, supported by popular favour, might disregard all past claims. By extinguishing the meditated impeachment, he well knew that he should gratify the king. He preferred a different line of action, apparently more elevated, noble, and incorrupt. Probably, too, he was not sorry, by permitting the minority leaders to expend the whole force of their talents, as well as their time, against Hastings, to occupy them in an almost interminable pursuit; while, from the eminence where he stood, he assumed a dignified neutrality, leaving national justice to find her own channel. Dundas had stronger personal motives even than Pitt for abandoning Hastings to the attacks of his enemies. He had raised himself to be the *real* head of the East India Board, and he dreaded no individual so much as the governor-general of Bengal. In fact, if Hastings had surmounted the charges

made by Burke, he would, in all probability, have been immediately created a British peer, or at least a privy counsellor, and must have obtained a seat at the board of control. Nor could he have been a mere passive, subservient member of that board. His experience, sustained by local knowledge, must have given a preponderant weight to all his opinions. From that instant Dundas would necessarily have beheld the edifice of his greatness shaken, if not subverted.

Burke, therefore, in bringing Hastings before a parliamentary tribunal, was in fact labouring for Dundas ; who, unless we suppose him to have been superior to every movement of self-interest and ambition, must have secretly exulted in the misfortunes of a man formed to check his political progress. If, after thus contemplating the concealed causes which operated against Hastings, we calculate their combined force, we shall not wonder that he was borne away by them ; and we cannot avoid condemning the temerity or presumption, which roused the lion in his den. Lord Clive was better advised, and escaped impeachment, because he did not defy or provoke it. We may justly question whether, if Major Scott had never appeared within the walls of the house of commons, or exerted his pen for Hastings, he would ever have been impeached at the bar of the lords. It was the imprudent zeal of his agent, that in some measure compelled Burke

to produce his charges. Scott's exertions in Hastings's cause were not less injurious than Sir William Draper's interference proved to the Marquis of Granby, when, unsolicited, he entered the lists against *Junius*. Burke himself indeed declared, when addressing the house on the 17th of February, that "he was called upon and driven to the business which he had now engaged to prosecute."

*17th—20th February.*—This memorable judicial proceeding, one of the most interesting which has been instituted in our time, was opened by Burke in a manner equally solemn and impressive. The attendance was numerous; and never perhaps did any public question excite a more general curiosity; blended with sentiments of admiration, or of condemnation, for the person who formed the object of prosecution, according to the estimate formed of his official conduct. With great ability, aided by classic allusions or citations applicable to the case, Burke detailed the different modes of bringing a state criminal before the highest tribunal known to the British constitution; finally deciding in favour of impeachment. The recent instance of Rumbold, who had found means to frustrate "a bill of pains and penalties," deterred him, he said, from having again recourse to so ineffectual an expedient. To the alternative of ordering the attorney-general to prosecute in the court of king's bench, he likewise

objected; partly, because Arden appeared unwilling to exert his abilities in the cause; but, as Burke asserted, still more on account of the magnitude and enormity of Hastings's offences. No doubt, however, he did not chuse to entrust the decision to the plain sense of a jury, under the direction of a lord chief-justice whose political opinions were well known to be highly favourable to Hastings. Against Dundas, Burke indulged in the severest animadversions, as a man insensible to virtue and principle; endeavouring to prove his assertion by a reference to the treasurer of the navy's conduct in 1782, when, in his capacity of chairman of the *secret committee*, he moved more than one *resolution* criminating, or at least, heavily inculpating, the governor-general of Bengal. No individual better knew than Burke how to enlist and marshal the finest emotions or passions of the human mind, in whatever cause he undertook; sometimes perhaps in violation of truth, frequently in opposition to reason. He contrasted the ready assistance which Dundas had experienced, when, four years earlier, under the Rockingham administration, he called for papers and documents to prove delinquency against Hastings; with the scanty means of legal information now afforded by government to himself while engaged in a similar pursuit.

"I might," exclaimed he, "consider the rejection of my demand as a stratagem to defeat the

whole enquiry ; but I feel too awful a sense of public justice, ever to desert its cause. The ruin of Roman justice arose *ex prevaricatione accusatorum*. When Cicero accused Verres, he was supported, not abandoned, by the flower of the senate. The Hortensii, the Metelli, and the Marcelli, all sustained him. Every species of evidence was furnished. The public records were laid open. One hundred and fifty days were granted him to collect materials, even from a province so near as Sicily to the seat of government. Can it now be asserted that the administration of justice is in honourable or liberal hands, if proofs demanded by the accuser are refused and withheld ? The downfall of the greatest empire which the world ever witnessed, originated in the mal-administration of its provinces.”—“ I looked for aid from those in authority. Alas ! I perceive that lesser objects interest them. The Cicero of the British senate, (looking at Dundas,) when he seemed to feel indignant at the crimes committed in the East, was not thus treated. But I perceive, (turning his eyes on Pitt,) that any operations by which the three per cents. may be raised in value, affect ministers more deeply than vindicating the violated rights of millions of the human race. Notwithstanding, however, every obstruction which can be thrown in my way, a sense of public duty will make me surmount them. I feel strong in the goodness of my cause,

and, if this house support me, I will bring forward my charge. Confident of success, I will hazard the attempt, against every combination of power, or of wealth."

Neither Dundas nor Pitt could remain silent under such imputations. The former minister observed, that he never had moved any *resolution* respecting Hastings, the object of which went beyond his *recall*. "The infraction of the treaty of Poorunder concluded with the Mharattas, and the expensive establishments set up by him in India," continued Dundas, "I thought highly *culpable* in 1782. I think so still; but I do not regard Mr. Hastings as having done any act of a *criminal* nature." He concluded by declaring, that with respect to the production of papers, it was his intention to throw no unnecessary impediment in the way of enquiry. The chancellor of the exchequer likewise addressed the house, and every expression which fell from his lips attracted notice, as affording a clue whereby to judge of his future intentions; but they were clothed in language too guarded and indefinite to furnish any certain criterion. Hastings, he admitted, appeared, under some points of view, a resplendent character; while, if viewed through the medium of other parts of his administration, he excited condemnation. Having justified Dundas from the imputation of inconsistency, on account of his conduct in 1782, as compared with his present line of action,



“ If,” added Pitt, “ any real guilt were to be investigated, and any punishment to be inflicted, I am of opinion that he would be as proper to guide the prosecution, and as likely to accomplish every purpose of public justice, as the individuals into whose hands it has devolved. But, when the established rules of evidence are to be overleaped, and a judicial proceeding is to be conducted rather by violence and personal resentment than by the dull forms of ordinary law, — then, indeed, I consider the gentlemen who have undertaken it as the fittest persons to whom it should be entrusted.—I am,” concluded Pitt, “ neither a determined friend nor foe to Mr. Hastings; but I will support the principles of justice and equity. I recommend a calm, dispassionate investigation, leaving every man to follow the impulse of his own mind.” Almost all the documents required by Burke were laid on the table; while universal attention was directed towards the great prosecution that seemed about to commence in Westminster.

*27th February.*—It was nevertheless intermediately attracted into another channel by Pitt himself, who in person brought forward a measure calculated from its nature and object to suspend for the time every inferior matter of national consideration. I mean, the projected fortifications for the defence of Portsmouth and Plymouth. We have seen that the minister had been restrained during the preceding session from devoting to

their construction a considerable sum of money, in consequence of the general jealousy or disapprobation manifested on the subject. He nevertheless thought proper to resume it, and to shock public opinion by the prominent part which he took in propelling so obnoxious a system, in defiance of every objection. The whole transaction forms one of the most characteristic features of Pitt's long administration. Among the individuals who occupied an eminent place in his esteem was, as I have already stated, the Duke of Richmond; but he by no means enjoyed the national, or even parliamentary confidence, in the same degree. Not content with placing him at the head of the ordnance, Pitt had given him a seat in the cabinet; and this new Archimedes, from the elevation which he had attained, undertook to shake, or rather to change and to remove, the foundation of the national greatness. The navy had always been considered as our peculiar bulwark and safeguard. Without attempting to supersede a species of defence so analogous to our insular position, the duke proposed to augment our security by works of very considerable magnitude and expence, intended to be constructed under the superintendence of scientific engineers.

In order to obviate the prejudices entertained against his proposition, a board, composed of naval and military officers, had been formed, who were empowered to examine and report to the king

their opinion on the measure. But the duke being constituted the president, and all the questions put to the members originating from *him*; their *report*, which strongly recommended the plan, was very unfavourably received by the public. Even the approbation of the board was not by any means unanimous. Three individuals strongly dissented from it, of whom two sate in the lower, and the third in the upper house of parliament. General Burgoyne and Captain Macbride had, indeed, already expressed their condemnation of the whole plan. They were sustained by Earl Percy, who very soon after this time became Duke of Northumberland. His high rank, independence of mind, and military experience, gave no small weight to his opinion. The "*Rolliad*," when separately characterizing them, says,—

" See Burgoyne, rapt in all a soldier's pride,  
Damn with a shrug, and with a look deride ;  
While coarse Macbride a busier task assumes,  
And tears with graceless rage our hero's plumes.—  
And Percy, too, of lineage justly vain,  
Surveys the system with a mild disdain."

In the course of the month of February, three debates took place relative to the proposed fortifications, at all of which the master-general of the ordnance was present; not *under* the gallery, at the lower extremity of the house, where as a peer he ought naturally to have been seated, but *in* the gallery appropriated to members of the house of

commons, over the treasury bench, and directly opposite to his nephew, Fox. From this commanding position he might be said to survey, as well as to hear, the discussion. Throughout each of these evenings, Pitt sustained the whole weight of the arguments urged against the plan, answered in person every objection, and stood, as it were, singly in the breach. None of his coadjutors in office uttered a word. Mr. Grenville was silent; Lord Mulgrave remained mute; and even Dundas, who on almost every other question came forward with alacrity, found no tongue to defend the Duke of Richmond's system. Sheridan, Courtney, and Burgoyne exposed the manœuvres used to produce the favourable *report* made on the subject by the board of officers. Fox, unmoved by the presence of the duke, his uncle, held up the whole project to derision; while he at the same time protested that he considered the proposition itself of fortifying the dock-yards, as neither a military nor a naval question. "It is," said he, "one of a broader nature,—political, financial, and constitutional." Sheridan moved for a copy of the appointment of the board, and such portions of their instructions and *report* as his majesty might deem it discreet to make public, without injury to the state. But Pitt either eluded or refused the information required, on various pretences, some of which by no means appeared to be candid or satisfactory. He stated that it would be indecor-

ous and improper to call for parts of the *report* which the king in his discretion had thought fit to withhold. Sheridan's *motion* was negatived without a division. It seemed as if the minister reckoned on the blind, as well as submissive, devotion of the house; but the event greatly deceived his expectation.

Pitt-himself commenced the discussion, justifying and recommending the system of fortifications, as applicable to our national defence, by appeals to English history, from Elizabeth down to George the Second. Even as an operation of finance, which might demand, he allowed, near a million sterling before it would be completed; he declared that, "considering the protection derived from it, and the means it would afford for preventing a future war, the first million that should be applied towards creating a sinking fund would not be more wisely or judiciously employed than a similar sum expended on the proposed works." If oratory could have procured a majority of votes, unquestionably Pitt would have carried the question; but the common sense of his hearers rejected its fascination. Two of the four representatives for Devon and Cornwall, Mr. Bastard and Sir William Lemon, rising successively, in few and simple words expressed their insurmountable objections to the measure. The former, after comparing the noble projector of these impregnable bulwarks to the knight of Cervantes, moved, that "works

on so extensive a plan are inexpedient." Sir William Lemon admonished the minister against pursuing a proposition which would infallibly deprive him of the favour and confidence of the people. Walwyn, one of the members for the city of Hereford,—a man who, I believe, never rose to speak either before or since,—warned the chancellor of the exchequer not to shock the public feeling by persisting to recommend a system odious to the nation. "Report confidently asserts," added he, "that the right honourable gentleman's mind is not with the measure, nor sincerely friendly to it." Pitt rising with some indignation, to repel so false and groundless an aspersion, Walwyn calmly replied, "I spoke merely from report, and I had hoped that the report was founded in truth."

It was about midnight when Sheridan rose, and his speech constituted one of the most splendid exhibitions of genius which I witnessed during the time that I sate in parliament. It would be difficult to decide whether he was most severe on the chancellor of the exchequer, or on the master-general of the ordnance. After exhausting his artillery upon Pitt, he then turned to the duke. Holding in his hand the *report* made by the board of officers, he complimented the noble president on his talents as an *engineer*, "which," Sheridan observed, "were strongly evinced in planning and constructing that very paper. His professional ability shines as conspicuously there," added he, "as upon

our shores. He has made it a contest of posts, and conducted his reasoning not less on principles of trigonometry than of logic. There are certain assumptions thrown up, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the principal object of debate ; strong provisos protect and cover the flanks of his assertions ; his very queries are in casemates. No impression, therefore, can be made on this fortress of sophistry by any loose or general observations. It becomes necessary to open trenches before the citadel, and to assail it by regular approaches." Beautiful and varied as was this chain of metaphors, drawn from the technical terms of art themselves, applied to the subject under debate ; yet its effect was far outdone when, after having captivated the fancy, he addressed the reason and the feelings of his audience. He well knew that the decorations of oratory, or the play of rhetoric, would never gain a vote among the country gentlemen ; whose organs, not calculated for such delicate aliments, required plainer and more substantial nourishment. Sheridan's tact was so fine, his faculties so much under control, his knowledge of human nature so accurate, and his temper so unruffled, that he always seemed to play with the question. Unlike Burke, whose passions frequently carried him out of the course, Sheridan assumed, acted, and performed the part which his judgment suggested or dictated, never losing sight of the object, and never sacrificing it merely to attain the

barren praise of eloquence, however ardent might be his desire of fame.

When Sheridan had held up the Duke of Richmond's system to reprobation as fallacious, dangerous, expensive, and unconstitutional ; when he had compelled Pitt himself reluctantly to convict his friend of being a wild visionary, who, embracing a just principle, deduced from it the most preposterous conclusions ; finally, when he had demonstrated that all the data on which rested the proposition were only distortions of fact, or of testimony ; he then made his last appeal to the sense, principles, and independence of the county members ; in other words, of the landed interest. His ideas, admirably arranged, were not lost even on the most obtuse, weary, or sleepy of his auditors.

Sheridan's manner, tones, and inflexions of voice, now playful, now grave, but never carried to violence or excess, gave a peculiar charm to his enunciation. Fox felt indeed so clearly his own inability to add any thing to such a speech, that, though he rose when Sheridan sate down, he addressed the house with comparative brevity. His noble nature rendered him incapable of jealousy or rivalry. Never, I believe, was any individual more exempt from every sentiment of that description ! His friend had forestalled the subject under discussion : Fox therefore alluded to some other topics which grew out of it. Pitt having characterized the late treaty made by the



Earl of Shelburne with France, as a *necessary* peace; and Barré, indignant at that epithet, denominated it a *great* and *glorious* peace; Fox peremptorily denied that either the one or the other term could be applied to it with truth. "I maintain," continued he, "we had a right, under the circumstances of the country in January 1783, to expect a far more advantageous treaty. If, however, it really was *great* and *glorious*, those who were then in office have singularly distributed the rewards due to its authors. For themselves, they have reserved places and emoluments; leaving the individual who was its principal negotiator, in possession of all the encomiums due to so meritorious a work. Ease and praise they have liberally bestowed on the noble lord. For themselves, they have reserved the cares, the fatigues, and the salaries of office." These animadversions upon Pitt's treatment of the Marquis of Lansdown must have been most painful to the minister; but though he spoke in reply to Fox at considerable length, he made no allusion to the circumstance. Even at this hour an obscurity still overhangs the cause of the disunion that existed between those two first ministers;—an obscurity which perhaps may never be completely withdrawn or elucidated.

Dundas, conscious that his silence must infallibly operate as a virtual desertion of his friend the minister, at length took part in the discussion.

His physical powers of countenance and of voice were not indeed exceeded by those of any man who possessed a seat within the walls of the house ; and he had already made so many sacrifices of political opinion to Pitt, that it could not be supposed he would refuse to come forward on the present occasion. The morning began faintly to dawn, when the chancellor of the exchequer rose a second time ; and his appearance suspended the general impatience for the question. His discourse seemed principally addressed to Walwyn, with a view to counteract the injurious impression made in ascribing to him insincerity. As soon as he sate down, the division took place, for which great anxiety had been expressed by both parties, each side anticipating success. We divided on the original *motion* of Pitt, that “it is an essential object for the safety of the state, to fortify the dock-yards at Portsmouth and Plymouth.” When the result was announced, and the numbers were declared to be equal ; namely, one hundred and sixty-nine *ayes*, and as many *noes* ; an uproar arose, which I had not witnessed within those walls since the memorable division of the 27th of February 1782 ;—exactly four years earlier ;—on which night Lord North remained in a minority of nineteen, and the further progress of the American war was arrested. Many of the minister’s friends and adherents rejoiced, I believe, in his defeat. Indeed, I ques-

tion whether of the one hundred and sixty-nine persons who supported him, sixty-nine really wished him success. I was, myself, one of those who voted with him; but my line of conduct in 1786, whatever it may have been, has no influence on my written opinions in 1818.

Silence being at length obtained, though not without difficulty, Cornwall stood up; and after stating the equality of numbers, added, that at so late an hour he was too much exhausted to enter on a subject which had been already thoroughly discussed. "I shall therefore," subjoined he, "content myself with voting against the original *motion*, and declaring that the *noes* have carried the question." At these words the acclamations redoubled. Pitt's proposition being thus negatived, Bastard's *amendment* naturally came forward, which pronounced the inexpediency of adopting the plan recommended by the board of officers. But the chancellor of the exchequer instantly moved *the order of the day*. A new debate might now have arisen, if Bastard had not proposed a compromise; offering to wave his *amendment*, provided that Pitt would pledge himself not to revive the system which had just been reprobated by the house. The minister accepted the offer; adding, that "the opinion so clearly expressed by the recent vote should serve as a law to him." With this declaration the member for Devon professed himself satisfied;

and *the order of the day* being moved from the treasury bench, was carried without any opposition. We did not, however, adjourn till Fox had given notice of the postponement of various *motions* for papers which Burke intended to demand, in order to prove his charges against Hastings. "My right honourable friend," said Fox, "has been prevented by indisposition from attending his duty here on this evening;—a circumstance most fortunate, sir, for *you*," (looking at the Speaker,) "as it has afforded you an opportunity, which otherwise you could not have enjoyed, of acquiring immortal honour, by giving your casting vote against the proposed fortifications." No notice was taken of this sarcasm, and we at length separated, at half-past seven o'clock in the morning. Public opinion unquestionably went with the opposition. Prints appeared, in which the Duke of Richmond was represented attempting to apply the match to a battery of cannon; while the Speaker of the house of commons, habited in his official robes, extinguished the fire by the same means which Captain Lemuel Gulliver says he successfully used to quench the flames that broke out in the royal apartments, during his stay in Lilliput.

The measure in question was the *third* great ministerial experiment in which Pitt had been completely defeated within the space of about twenty-one months. The *first*,—namely, *the West-*

*minster scrutiny*, an act of persecution and oppression, instituted with a view to deprive Fox of his seat for that city,—after a most harassing and expensive contest, terminated in such a manner as to cover the government with obloquy. Temerity characterized *the Irish propositions*, which were besides so ill digested when brought into the house by ministers, that to the laborious investigations of the opposition, they owed their principal amelioration. Yet, even when thus amended, they were rejected not less by the people, than by the parliament, of Ireland. On the present occasion, Pitt seemed to have resigned himself blindly into the hands of a nobleman who, however patriotic might be his intentions, was generally recognized as a man of a heated mind, so tenacious of his opinions as rarely to recede on any point, and of very doubtful judgment. *The plan of fortifications* owed its defeat, not to the numbers, or to the eloquence, of the regular opposers of ministry; but to the country gentlemen, the usual supporters of administration. Hardly more than three hundred and forty members voted on the question. There remained therefore near two hundred and twenty absentees, of whom a very large proportion unquestionably were adverse in sentiment to the measure.

The *coalition*, during the eight months that they retained possession of power, made only *one*

false step, which proved, however, fatal; while Pitt, after *three*, stood firm. The reason was obvious. Lord North and Fox made a mutual sacrifice of principle, as well as of enmity, to their ambition. The minister, though censurable or mistaken on many great points of policy, yet was disinterested, and elevated above every object except glory. Fox ought to have foreseen that his own popularity, and the king's unpopularity, *both*, arose principally from the American war; and would, *both*, cease, at least in a considerable degree, with the termination of that contest. Instead of conciliating the sovereign, as he should have done, Fox attempted to bind him. Nor can it be justly pretended that the royal favour was unattainable, after the offences which he had committed. His uncle, the Duke of Richmond, while in opposition, had made use more than once of very contumelious personal expressions relative to his majesty, when speaking as a peer, in his place. Yet he was not proscribed. Wilkes stood during many years in open personal hostility to the king. Nevertheless, his conduct in opposing the *East India Bill* obliterated his transgressions. Fox might, no doubt, have made his peace at St. James's; but he preferred another mode of cementing his power.

If, in February 1786, we estimate the respective political talents possessed by the two sides of the house, we shall be compelled to admit that the

intellectual balance preponderated greatly in favour of opposition. Pitt and Dundas, sustained by Mr. William Grenville, constituted the principal ability found on the treasury bench: for Jenkinson rarely took any part in debate, except on matters connected with commerce or navigation. He had, besides, nearly *served out his time*, and expected to be speedily “rapt up into that heaven of rest,” as Burke termed it, the house of peers. It was likewise Jenkinson’s supposed *influence*, much more than his *eloquence*, or even his *information*, which had given him weight in parliament. Lord Mulgrave, dull, heavy, loud, monotonous, and prosaic, tired more than he amused his audience. Neither the attorney nor the solicitor general were favourably heard when they rose; and Scott, the present lord chancellor, had not yet been retained by administration. The two boards of treasury and admiralty afforded no assistance to government, though the Marquis of Graham occasionally presented himself to the Speaker’s notice. Lord Mahon, whose energies of body and mind, sustained by his enthusiasm in Pitt’s cause, supplied his defects of judgment, and who frequently mixed in debate, was withdrawn just at this time from the house of commons, by his father Earl Stanhope’s death.

Thus stood the account on the side of ministry. Let us now survey the opposite benches. *There* were seated Fox and Burke, Lord North and She-

ridan; presenting such a combination of eloquence, learning, wit, and intellect, as the annals of parliament probably have never exhibited at the same time, and whose powers of argument, or of pleasantry, were often drawn out on the same evening against the same measure. Behind them appeared Francis, Windham, and Courtenay, occasionally supported by General Burgoyne, and Sir Grey Cooper. It is true that their ranks had suffered a loss by Eden's defection; but Pitt had not acquired any parliamentary strength in consequence, Eden's services being destined for the meridian of Paris, and were not to be exerted at Westminster. The most prejudiced man must admit the superiority of talent at this period among the minority. Fox, indeed, freely avowed that Pitt stood on foundations altogether unconnected with the abilities necessary for a statesman. When addressing the house on the 27th of February, he observed, "It would be absurd to suppose, on considerations of party, that our carrying the proposed *amendment* can be an object of importance. Does any man imagine that I, or any of my friends, shall be advanced one step nearer the acquisition of power, whether the Duke of Richmond's fortification plan succeeds or is negatived? If defeating the minister, even upon points which he has exerted his whole force to carry, could have brought us nearer to office, how happens it that, after the failures he has undergone, he not only remains unshaken, but



seems to take deeper root? Has the complete rejection of *the Irish propositions* affected him in his ministerial capacity? Did his shameful defeat in the business of *the Westminster scrutiny*, either injure *him*, or serve *me*, in a ministerial point of view? It is a fact that, as a minister, he thrives by defeat, and derives strength from disappointment." To such a desperate, and almost hopeless situation, had Fox's want of prudence reduced him, that scarcely any event except the demise of the crown seemed to afford him a prospect of seizing again the reins of government.

*March.*—Throughout a considerable part of the month of March, Burke continued to call for papers of various kinds, requisite for substantiating his charges against the late governor-general of India. The first in order of time related to the peace made with the Mharattas. Dundas and Pitt both objected to their disclosure, not only as revealing transactions which ought on no consideration to be divulged, but inasmuch as the late treaty, so happily concluded by Hastings, merited universal applause. The treasurer of the navy and the chancellor of the exchequer seemed on this occasion to vie with each other in their encomiums relative to its salutary operation. "The benefits resulting from it," observed Dundas, "proved the salvation of the British empire in Asia. It dissolved one of the greatest confederacies ever formed against our possessions there; and if Mr.

Hastings had not effected it, our power must have been subverted in that quarter of the globe." Many persons, deceived by such flattering testimonies, thus pronounced from the treasury bench, anticipated a speedy and a triumphant termination of the charges brought forward against Hastings. But there were others, among whom Rigby might be enumerated, who, as the event proved, saw more clearly, and who always predicted that ministers would abandon him in a subsequent stage of the prosecution.

Major Scott, as his agent and representative, usually, if not invariably, took part in every discussion respecting Hastings. His accurate local knowledge of the scene where the transactions took place, enabled him to contend even with Burke, and to dispute every inch of ground; sometimes to refute, or to disprove, the assertions made from the opposition benches. During the debate of the 3rd of March, Frederick Montagu having remarked that "great as were Burke's abilities, unwearied as was his diligence in the investigation of truth, yet it was much to be feared he must trust to posterity for his remuneration;" Scott demanded, "for what acts he was to receive his reward from posterity? Will it be for the violent and opprobrious epithets which he uniformly bestows on Mr. Hastings? Strong as that language has been, his treatment of the noble lord in the blue ribband seated near him, and now become his

noble friend, was equally pointed. He has pledged himself to impeach Mr. Hastings. Did he not pledge himself formerly to impeach the noble lord? Nay, his impeachment was much further advanced ; for, as I have been assured, he declared that it was in his pocket." Burke took no notice of this personal attack ; but Scott asserting that in the month of November 1783, when the celebrated *East India Bill* was introduced into parliament by Fox, he had received a message or intimation from persons in office, holding out security to Mr. Hastings against the threatened impeachment, provided his friends would engage to remain neuter, Fox instantly rose to repel the accusation. In a manner, and in words the most solemn, he denied that any proposal had ever been made for an accommodation with Mr. Hastings, either with *his* knowledge or concurrence. The same positive denial he repeated on the part of all his colleagues. Scott nevertheless maintained the accuracy of his assertion ; but, as the gentleman from whom the overture came was not then present in his place, either to confirm or to contradict it, all further explanations were by mutual consent postponed till he should appear.

*6th March.*—The individual in question was no other than Sheridan, who coming forward, as the gravity of the case required, extricated both himself and his friends with consummate address. He admitted, indeed, that at the time to which

allusion was made, he, as one of the secretaries of the treasury, had sent a confidential person to Major Scott, empowered to know whether Hastings, if recalled, would comply, and return to England? "In order," added he, "to explain the principle on which I thus acted, I will state, that after the *resolutions* inculpating Mr. Hastings, to which this house agreed on the 28th of May 1782, I thought there remained only two lines of conduct to be pursued: one, to recall him instantly by the strong arm of parliament, and to inflict on him exemplary punishment; the other, to bring in an *East India bill*, which, on the ground of expediency, and from regard to the difference of opinions respecting the governor-general's public merits, should banish all retrospect. These being my opinions, and *the latter measure appearing to me most expedient to be adopted*, I therefore commissioned a mutual friend to put the question above stated to the major. In the course of their conversation the *East India Bill* was mentioned; but not with the most remote idea of bartering impunity to Mr. Hastings in return for his support of that *bill*. I have had an interview with the person whom I sent, and he assures me, as he has likewise certified to the major, that such is the exact fact. I doubt not, therefore, of his acknowledging his mistake respecting the supposed compromise." A more ingenious defence could not easily have been set up; nor did Scott, when he

replied, deny that Sheridan's friend *now* confirmed every word of the actual statement. But he maintained, that though he was *now* therefore bound so to think, he had understood the reverse *at the time, and had remained ever since under that impression*. Here therefore the matter ended, and Fox expressed great gratification at its being so satisfactorily explained; but many persons remained incredulous on the subject. It was obvious that Sheridan had tried to open some negotiation with Hastings's agent, and that the latter had conceived it to hold out a compromise. Nor did it appear less indisputable that Sheridan was a reluctant party to the present impeachment. His own confession fully warranted such a conclusion.

*7th March.*—The interests, the government, and all the concerns of our East India possessions, seemed at this period of time to take an almost exclusive hold of parliament, and of the public mind. Francis, whose intellectual energies, aided by thorough local information, and cloathed in language of uncommon asperity, as well as force, enabled him to wield with ease the subject; attempted to explain and amend Pitt's *East India Bill* of 1784. He failed in effecting his object as a matter of parliamentary revision; but he did not fail in impressing his audience with a conviction of his profound knowledge of the question, and enlarged powers of mind. I speak most impartially;—for I neither agreed with him on political points, nor regarded him with any degree

of predilection. Like Burke, whose prejudices of many kinds often obscured his reason; Francis appeared to be sometimes animated by enmities which extinguished every liberal sentiment in his bosom. He always affected to consider Burke as infinitely his superior. Burke was so in powers of fancy, and in classic knowledge: but Francis possessed equal acuteness, and perhaps more depth of thought. If Francis was *Junius*,—of which fact I entertain no doubt,—we may question to which of them posterity will assign the highest place. “The relation in which I stand to my right honourable friend,” said Francis, “confers on *him* every claim that belongs to authority, and justifies in *me* every sentiment of submission. It is the feeling of a being who is instructed, towards the being that instructs him. I am not equal to the task of pronouncing his panegyric. Should I indeed undertake it, my reflections would utterly discompose me. They would lead me to the painful contemplation of virtues unrewarded, and of veteran services growing grey under the neglect, if not the ingratitude, of his country. If fame constitute a reward, he possesses it already: but I know that he looks forward to a more noble recompence. He believes, as I do, that in some other existence, virtue will meet its just retribution; in a state where those who have faithfully and gratuitously served mankind,

“Shall find the generous labour was not lost.”

Burke did not, however, manifest any inclination

to "serve gratuitously" under Pitt, when he went over to administration in 1793; nor did he seem inclined to expect his "retribution in a future state of existence." He preferred seeking his reward from the treasury in this life.

*16th—22nd March.*—Ever since Lord Macartney's unexpected return from Bengal, the cabinet determined on sending out a person of high rank to fill the important post of governor-general. It was offered to my friend Lord Walsingham, who, though not endowed with pre-eminent talents, yet possessed many qualities that fitted him for the situation. I have perused Pitt's letter addressed to him on the occasion, proposing to him the appointment. But that minister refusing to comply with some demands which he made, on the contingency of his decease happening while he remained in India, the negotiation terminated without effect. At length Lord Cornwallis was prevailed on to accept it. Perhaps a wiser or better selection could not, on the whole, have been made for so eminent an office. At the time when it took place, his faculties were adequate to the employment, yet not above it; combining judgment with moderation. Simplicity of manners and incorruptible integrity were in him united, if not with military talents, at least with military experience. His disaster at York Town, in October 1781, had not left any imputation on his professional character; it being

well known that the orders were peremptory to advance into the province of Virginia, and that his surrender was the result of imperious circumstances. In order to give greater lustre to his appointment, he was named not only governor-general, but commander-in-chief, with a proportionate augmentation of salary. A much more important regulation, empowering him to decide upon every measure, whether the members of the supreme council agreed in opinion with him, or dissented from him; formed the leading feature of a *bill* which Dundas brought into the house of commons at this time. All the ability of the opposition benches drew out in array against a clause, calculated, as they asserted, to establish systematic despotism throughout our East India possessions, vested in the hands of one person. Nor could the fact be denied, though the principle was defended and justified by ministers. Sheridan attacked the *bill* itself, as forming a satire on Pitt's *bill* of 1784, which it cut up by the roots; "proving," he said, that a measure so much vaunted as a masterpiece of legislation, only two years earlier, now turned out, by the admission of its own authors, "*a very foolish piece of business.*"

*22nd March.*—But the principal attention was justly directed on that evening towards Burke, who poured out the accumulated stores of his indignation in a tone of such violence as excited astonishment even in *him*. The eccentricity and



luxuriance of his fancy, enriched with classic images, and elevated on the stilts of poetry, as well as of history, seemed to hurry him out of the ordinary path of debate on this occasion. His spleen was indeed particularly excited by some circumstances which, operating on his very irritable temper, rendered him altogether *Pindaric*. Among the members of the last and present parliament who had acted conjointly with Burke, in his endeavours to expose and to reform the abuses committed throughout India, was Mr. Boughton Rouse, one of the representatives for the borough of Evesham. Having resided many years in Bengal, he possessed great local information respecting the administration of the revenue in that part of our Eastern possessions. Joining to his knowledge much activity, and no inconsiderable portion of talent, Burke associated him in 1781 to the labours of the *select* committee. While he remained a member of that body, Rouse lent his assistance towards the *first report* made by them to the house, which owed to him some of the most important parts of its composition. But Rouse, after having been thus initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries of Hindostan, had thought proper to withdraw himself from the committee. Perceiving that it was become an instrument of faction, persecution, and private attack, he declined any further attendance on it; ultimately quitting the *coalition*, and joining Pitt. Nor was he left unre-

munerated: for when, in 1784, the new East India Board was instituted, Rouse received the appointment of secretary under the commissioners. Dundas, by this able manœuvre, converted a former opponent into an ally; while Burke considered him as an apostate, who, after being admitted to the consultations of the elect, had gone over to the opposite party.

On the evening to which I allude, the house resolving itself into a committee on Dundas's "India Bill," Boughton Rouse took his seat at the table as chairman. This spectacle overcame Burke's patience. To behold one of his antient associates, who had participated in his investigations of East India delinquency, placed in the front of the enemy's forces, was a trial too severe for his temper. He started up, and after inveighing in terms the most violent against the *bill*,—which, he said, was "a libel on the liberties and the constitution of England, an experiment to establish a Turkish tyranny throughout our dominions in the East,"—he addressed himself personally to the chairman. "Little did I ever imagine," exclaimed he, "that I should live to see *you*, sir, seated at that table, performing the part assigned you on the present occasion. I lament that the aid which you formerly lent me, when acting together as members of the *select committee*, should now end in the erection of a *whispering gallery* for the board of control, which

demands *auricular confession*. Armed, indeed, as that board will be by the powers which this *bill* confers on it, we shall witness a perfect imitation of the *ear of Dionysius*, so detested in antiquity. *The bill is a raw head and bloody bones*, a new *Star Chamber*, subverting *Magna Charta*!" "If," continued he, "ministers had come down to the house, and avowed at once, 'Our plan is despotism,' we should not have tolerated it. *Profligacy*, indeed, was ready to cry out, 'Give me arbitrary power.' But *Hypocrisy* more artfully says, 'No! let us circumvent them; and they will, by degrees, submit to bear a tyranny, the mention of which at first would have shaken every fibre in their composition.' And thus an abortion of despotism, like an imperfect foetus in a bottle, is produced, and handed about as a show; till, at length, the child's navel-strings have burst, and a full-grown monster of tyranny is now brought forth on the table. When *Hypocrisy* has finished her game, and *Profligacy* comes in turn to act her part,

"Then *shall* the warlike *Harry*, like himself,  
Assume the port of Mars; and at his heels,  
Leash'd in like hounds, *shall* Famine, Fire, and Sword,  
Crouch for employment."

The vehement tone in which this speech was pronounced, when illustrated by the simile of the foetus held up with both hands, presenting it thus

to the eyes of his audience, till it broke out into a full-formed monster of despotism ;—these images, summoned to his aid, like phantoms, by the dis-tempered but splendid imagination of Burke, were contemplated by all present with no common admiration. They could not, indeed, as Pitt observed in reply, be considered as arguments, nor was it easy to answer and refute such appeals to the fancy. There was, nevertheless, in the citation from Shakspeare applied to Dundas, an application so close and felicitous, as it would be difficult to parallel. His Christian name was not only Henry, but, in general, his acquaintances, when speaking of him in familiar conversation, called him *Harry* Dundas. Fox having panegyricized Burke's beautiful effusion as a masterpiece of eloquence and of reason, adding that "*it must be answered, and that he felt anxious to hear how ministers would repel its force,*" Pitt came forward. After justifying his own line of conduct, and that of Dundas, "With respect to the arguments," continued he, "of which mention has been made, I cannot pretend to say that I did not *hear* them ; the manner and elevation of voice in which they were delivered rendering that circumstance impossible. But I confess that I do not sufficiently comprehend how they bear upon the question now before the committee, so as to make them any appropriate *answer.*" When,

however, the clause empowering the governor-general, in cases of great emergency, to act without the concurrence of the supreme council, came to be debated, Dundas, far from evading its discussion, entered fully on its justification. Alluding to Burke's animated picture of the horrors and atrocities which would flow from it, "Notwithstanding," observed he, "the declamation which we have this evening heard relative to despotism; brilliant and eloquent as I allow it to be, I consider it as the mere flight of a wild and disordered imagination. Previous to accusing us as the abettors of arbitrary government, it behoves our opponents to prove that the dominion of *one* person is more to be dreaded, or is more a despotism, than the dominion of *two*;—a position not easy, I believe, to demonstrate."—"The individual to whom is confided the administration, becomes indeed invested, by the present *bill*, with more authority; but his responsibility is proportionably augmented. Nor can he, in virtue of this clause, commit any act which, with the concurrence of a majority of the council, he could not antecedently have performed." I own that this reasoning, as applied to power conferred in India, appeared to me at the time, and still impresses me, as sound and incontrovertible.

Fox, nevertheless, endeavoured to demonstrate that the authority given by the *bill* to the governor-general must be equally efficient, and

might be much more safely entrusted to him conjointly with the council. Pitt having stated the advantages which would result from the necessity imposed on the members of that board, to enter upon their journals the motives and reasons of their dissent; leaving to the governor-general the right to act on his own responsibility; Fox attacked him in a manner the most personal. "The minister," said he, "not only defends, but applauds, the institution of an inactive council, to whom are solely to be entrusted the powers of arguing, and of commemorating their opinions. It is indeed natural for *him* whose talent consists in language, and who, by his superior eloquence, can decorate error with the garb of truth, to commend the art in which he excels, and to depicture the sphere of action as inglorious. *Let others act! His ambition is only to debate.*" This remark, which seems to recall Virgil's

"Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,"

was not noticed by the chancellor of the exchequer, though he replied at great length to every other part of the speech. Did he feel, and as it were tacitly admit, the justice of the portrait? Unquestionably it was a likeness, but not drawn by a flattering pencil.

If we impartially examine Pitt's administration, or, more properly to speak, his two administrations, — which, between December 1783 and January 1806, comprized a period of time

not falling much short of nineteen years,—we shall perhaps incline to agree in opinion with Fox. Eloquence, transcendent eloquence, formed the foundation and the key-stone of Pitt's ministerial greatness. Every other quality in him was accessory. He possessed indeed many eminent,—I might say, sublime endowments: paramount judgment in all matters that concerned his own political preservation, elevation of character, contempt of money, unspotted integrity, self-command, celerity in business, application, extraordinary financial talents, and the utmost decorum of manners. But he nevertheless failed in action. From 1784 down to 1792, while the winds were comparatively hushed, he acquired a high degree of renown, which he did not maintain when the tempest overtook him. He was forced into war early in 1793, more in compliance or subservience, as I believe, to the king's wishes, than from his own voluntary and thorough conviction of its good policy; after allowing the favourable moment for attacking France to pass, when in conjunction with Austria and Prussia, during the autumn of 1792, he might perhaps have preserved, or restored, the monarchy. All his measures throughout the first stages of the French Revolution were better defended in parliament than concerted in cabinet. Witness the ill-advised siege of Dunkirk! Witness Sombreuil's more disastrous expedition to Quiberon

in 1795! Nor was the attack of Ostend planned with ability. What numbers were sacrificed at St. Domingo! But how shall we speak of the operations carried on at the Helder in 1799, where the carnage of officers exceeded any similar loss sustained since the affair of Bunker's Hill, and where the Duke of York narrowly escaped being carried a prisoner to Paris! Scarcely was the convention of Closter-seven, one of the most humiliating in our history, more ignominious than the retreat from the Helder. His father was a war-minister. Pitt was not. Neither was Dundas a war-minister. Both were giants on the treasury bench; men of ordinary dimensions, when planning a campaign. Pitt, whatever flattery or friendship may assert, was *not* "the pilot who *weathered* the storm." He *sustained it*; but, far from weathering it, he went down at the helm when the waves ran highest. It was not his hereditary, constitutional gout alone which dispatched him before he had completed his forty-seventh year. Two events, one internal, the other foreign, precipitated, while they embittered, his dissolution. The first was Dundas's impeachment, which proved a vital blow to him. Mack's disastrous campaign, following in the autumn of 1805, closed his career.

While I am engaged on this curious subject, as I am conscious that posterity will not take *my* word on such a point, unsustained by better tes-



timony, I shall endeavour to support my assertion by something like proof; though in thus carrying the work at once twenty years forward, from 1786 to 1806, I well know that I violate the common rules of historical composition.

On Friday, the 27th of March 1812, Sir Walter Farquhar and I dined with Sir John Macpherson at Brompton Grove, near London. No other person was present. After dinner, the conversation turning on Pitt's last illness and death, Sir Walter said, "It was by no means the gout that killed him. The fatal campaign of 1805, and the battle of Austerlitz, terminated his life. I admit that his stomach was previously debilitated; but the calamities of Austria and Russia overcame him. Lord Melville's unfortunate impeachment, and his dismissal as first lord of the admiralty, laid the foundation of Pitt's diseases. When he came up from Bath, early in 1806, I went down to him at Salthill, and earnestly besought of him to remain there; it being so near to Windsor. I represented to him that he could have continual access to the king, and at the same time would breathe a pure air, and might see his friends. He would not listen to me, but came on to Putney. Nevertheless, when he arrived there, which was on a Saturday, he mounted the stairs with great agility, and went out to take the air in his carriage next day. On Monday the ministers got to him, and what passed among them, I know

not; but on the ensuing morning he was so much worse, as to excite in me the greatest alarm. He complained that he felt as if his body was cut in two. I strongly urged him not to apply to any public business; a piece of advice which I enforced to the persons about him. Conscious of his danger, I requested that a consultation might be held on his case; offering to fix on any physician that he might like, and to join a third with us. The proposition met with his ready and immediate assent. He named Reynolds, and to him was added Baillie. We met, and having examined his body, we all concurred in thinking that no vital part or function was defective: but, from the Tuesday, a putrid fever and a thrush manifested themselves. He held out till the Thursday se'nnight, on which day he expired. During the last nine days he lay chiefly on his back, swallowed only lime-water, and became extenuated in mind, as well as in body, to the greatest degree. I was continually with him, though I was not present when he breathed his last. His faculties sunk with the progress of his disorder, and his extreme physical debility." These were nearly Sir Walter's *ipsissima verba*, as I committed them to paper on the very same night, scarcely four hours after they were spoken.

It has always appeared to me, that some very strong points of resemblance existed between Pericles and Pitt. Both were during many years

the ministers of a free people. Both long enjoyed extraordinary popularity, and corresponding power. If the goddess of Persuasion was said to have placed herself on the lips of Pericles, so did she on those of Pitt. The same fascinating beauty and rotundity of expression were common to both. Disinterestedness, and superiority to all personal acquisition, alike distinguished them. Pericles had indeed the advantage of inheriting a larger paternal fortune than the English minister; but he no more encreased it at the national expence, than did Pitt. Both survived, if not the public favour, yet the public prosperity; and beheld their friends accused or sacrificed to public clamour. The fate of Phidias, Pericles's friend, charged with converting to his own use a part of the gold confided to him for ornamenting the statue of Minerva, bears a striking analogy to Lord Melville's impeachment, founded on his supposed appropriation or alienation of public money. But the Scottish minister ultimately escaped, while the immortal artist of antiquity perished in prison. Pitt, like Pericles, engaged in a long and disastrous conflict with foreign enemies: the latter, when he commenced the Peleponnesian war; the former, with revolutionary France. Neither of them survived to witness its termination. The Athenian, after sustaining the severest afflictions and privations in his family, sunk under the attacks of a pestilential malady, in the third year of

hostilities. The English statesman closed his memorable career precisely at the same period of the renewed struggle against the French republic, —or rather against the military despotism of its foreign ruler. Here, indeed, the parallel ends; for Pitt had no *Aspasia*. It is in Fox's history that we must look for *her*. In Mrs. Armstead, successively his mistress and his wife, we find imperfectly realized the celebrated Ionian courtesan, whom Pericles loved, and finally espoused.

I return from this digression, to the "East India Bill," which, notwithstanding all the opposition made to it by Burke and Fox, passed without difficulty. On every division throughout its progress, government carried the question by more than the proportion of two to one. Indeed, I believe, not many more than two hundred members ever divided on any clause: so feeble an interest did the *bill* excite, or so convinced was the public that the propositions adopted by ministers, one of which vested uncontrolled power in the governor-general under certain regulations, would contribute to the welfare of our territories in the East.

*29th March.*—I am now arrived in the order of time at that act of Mr. Pitt, to which his friends and admirers will naturally point, as constituting the proudest memorial of his political existence; and which, even his enemies, if any such there now are, will admit to form a lasting claim to national gratitude. I mean, the appropriation

of a million sterling annually towards the extinction of the national debt. This patriotic plan, long revolved in his mind, and repeatedly announced by him to parliament, he developed in a manner every way worthy of the conception. The attendance on the occasion was such as the magnitude and importance of the subject might justly challenge, but such as rarely takes place when no division is anticipated or expected. Pitt seemed on that evening to put into action all his powers of captivating, convincing, and subduing his hearers. The rapidity with which he laid open the state of the finances, could only be equalled by the luminous manner of conveying his ideas, and the facility, as well as perspicuity, that accompanied all his calculations. The meanest intellect might follow and comprehend his positions: they were apparently simple, and level to every capacity. Having shewn the deplorable state into which the public revenue had fallen at the close of the American war, he congratulated the house that an excess of near nine hundred thousand pounds,—which sum, he said, had now accrued above our annual expenditure,—would absolve him from the necessity of laying on more than one hundred thousand pounds of new taxes, in order to provide the requisite million. In a variety of modes he demonstrated the rapid, certain, and salutary operation of this sinking fund; which, he proposed, should begin to take effect

from the fifth day of the ensuing month of July. "The accumulation to be expected from it, would," he added, "in a period not of great extent, even as compared with the life of man ; but scarcely a day, when estimated with the duration of a powerful empire; namely, within the space of about twenty-eight years,—amount to such a sum as must leave at least four millions sterling annually free, to be applied, if necessary, to the exigencies of the state." Towards the conclusion of his speech, having completely laid before his audience every fact requisite for enabling them to form a sound judgment on the proposition ; emancipating himself, as it were, from the shackles of arithmetic, in which he had been hitherto detained, he burst into a beautiful and animated address to the house. In language of great energy he felicitated them on the auspicious prospect now presented to their view, and exhorted them to secure its realization, by making a permanent provision for the gradual diminution and discharge of the national debt.

Pitt employed considerably more than three hours in pronouncing this memorable discourse, during which time he manifested no symptom of intellectual lassitude or fatigue. Throughout all the financial calculations which his duty compelled him to make, some of which demanded not only memory, but great detail ; he used no notes, trusting to his own perfect knowledge of the subject.

I believe the most attentive listener could scarcely have detected any instance of error, or of oblivion, from its commencement down to its termination: but, when he finished, his bodily exhausture became very apparent. Distinguished as were Lord North's powers, while occupied in a similar function, they could not support a comparison with those exhibited by Pitt. There was, indeed, a wide difference between the painful labour of imposing new taxes for the support of an unsuccessful, as well as an unpopular war, and the exhilarating privilege of displaying the resources of a great country, reviving from her temporary depression, while she made provision for her future extrication. Such were the opposite tasks imposed on the two ministers! As Pitt approached the close of his brilliant but laborious exertion, his features brightened, and he seemed to taste by anticipation the recompence of his successful toil in the public service. If, indeed, Gray's lines were ever realized, when he says,—

“Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise;  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes;”—

if ever this picture was personified, and presented to human view, we must admit that the chancellor of the exchequer exhibited it on that evening. Even if we should *now* incline to consider the sinking fund itself, as “a clumsy compound of

delusion and quackery;"—for such it has been defined and declared to be by modern financiers of no ordinary attainments;—yet, as not only Pitt and Fox, but men of all parties, in and out of parliament, *then* joined in celebrating and extolling it; we cannot with justice refuse to the minister of George the Third, in 1786, the encomiums due to his well meant effort for sustaining and re-invigorating the foundations of public credit. Perhaps it may occur to those who cherish his memory, that he was not permitted to witness even the first term of twenty-eight years, to which he alluded, as "not of great extent, when compared with the ordinary life of man." Within twenty years from the day when he addressed the house, he had taken his place within the same tomb where reposed his father, at an inconsiderable distance from the scene of his actual triumph; and of him it might be said, as of *the youth of Pella*,—

"Sarcophago contentus erit."

The universal attention which had been centered upon Pitt while he spoke, became liberated when he closed his oration; the floor soon presenting a scene of disorder, noise, and confusion. Cornwall vainly attempted to enforce silence. In the midst of this uproar, Sir Grey Cooper, probably acting in concert with Fox, and desirous to allow time for the restoration of tranquillity, commenced a reply to the minister. Pro-



fessing his warmest wish to advance the accomplishment of the proposed measure, he nevertheless stated his doubts of its immediate practicability. As soon as the tumult had subsided, Fox rose, and, after declaring that no individual in that assembly was more friendly to the formation of a sinking fund than himself, he proceeded to dissect the speech just pronounced. With consummate ability, manifesting a profound acquaintance with all the sources of national wealth or prosperity, and disclosing views as enlarged as those of the chancellor of the exchequer for retrieving the finances, he did not the less contest almost all Pitt's premises or assumptions. Far from admitting that there existed an actual surplus of revenue to the amount of nine hundred thousand pounds, as the minister asserted, Fox endeavoured to demonstrate the fallacy of any such pretended balance. Nor did he fail to sustain his allegations, by proofs drawn either from Pitt's own admissions, or by facts and calculations apparently incontrovertible. He impressed me, indeed, on that occasion,—as he did upon every other, when questions of finance were agitated or discussed in parliament during my time,—with a conviction that he possessed talents nearly, if not in every respect fully, equal to those of Pitt. I am persuaded, if he had been placed at the head of the treasury and the exchequer, he would have made as able a first minister as his rival. Neither do I think that he

would have wanted vigilance, application, or integrity. Unfortunately, his habits of life, and his want of prudent restraint, particularly where the king was personally concerned; the manner in which he had *dissipated* his fortune, much more than his *want* of fortune, in which respect Pitt could not pretend to any superiority over him; his chosen companions, many of whom were personally obnoxious to his majesty; the satirical compositions, in almost all which the sovereign was held up to ridicule, continually emanating from the friends or members of opposition; lastly, Fox's avowed devotion to the heir-apparent, whom he had endeavoured, when he was secretary of state, to render more independent of his father, by giving the prince one hundred thousand pounds a year, instead of fifty thousand;—these facts or circumstances, and not any inferiority to Pitt in mental endowments of every description, constituted the real impediments to Fox's attainment of power.

The chancellor of the exchequer having in the course of his speech announced, that the incumbrances upon the civil list amounted to a sum exceeding two hundred thousand pounds, for which arrear he should speedily move a grant of money; Sheridan attacked him on the subject with equal ability and severity of animadversion. He observed, that such an unexpected demand formed a singular introduction to the sinking fund; to-

wards which measure, as founded on a pretended surplus of revenue above our expenditure, the public had been taught to look forward with eager anticipation. Like Fox, he denied that there existed any such balance, except in the illusory calculations or assertions of the minister; whom he moreover accused of contradicting his former assurances respecting the state of the civil list. Pitt, in reply, not content with imputing to Sheridan an error of memory, added, that "such a charge could only arise from a gross misrepresentation of his words." Sheridan nevertheless maintained the accuracy of his statement; appealing to the house against the chancellor of the exchequer, who, he said, might indulge as much as he thought proper in charges of misrepresentation. These recriminations did not diminish the triumph of the minister; whose motion "for granting to commissioners a million sterling, of which one fourth part should be applied every quarter towards discharging the public debt of the country," passed unanimously. Even though it could have been demonstrated that Pitt's calculations were exaggerated, yet the *principle* of appropriating an annual portion of the revenue towards the gradual liquidation of the national debt was in itself entitled to universal approbation. No measure could more contribute to augment his popularity, and consequently to strengthen his tenure of office.

30th March.—An interesting debate took place

at this time, which exhibited in a conspicuous light the change that had been effected in public opinion, upon points materially affecting the British constitution, within the four preceding years. After the close of Lord North's administration, the spirit of reform, conducted by Burke, and under him by Mr. Crewe and Sir Philip Clerke, had made gigantic inroads on the royal household. Marsham, one of the representatives for the county of Kent, who had taken so prominent a share, in conjunction with Powis, during the early part of Pitt's entry on employment; now attempted to extend the disqualifying enactments of Mr. Crewe's *bill* to all voters employed by the navy and ordnance boards. But he soon discovered that ministers were no longer favourable to such propositions. The chancellor of the exchequer, while he admitted that he had voted for Mr. Crewe's *bill*,—a vote of which, he said, he by no means repented,—yet professed his determination to resist any further innovation. The times, he maintained, were altogether changed since the house had come to a resolution that “the influence of the crown had encreased, was encreasing, and ought to be diminished.” Fox having attacked him on this tergiversation, or change of opinion, the minister was defended by Lord Mulgrave. He invidiously observed, that “their two characters were before the public, who would decide on their respective merits as candidates for power.” Then referring to

the conduct of the admiralty board towards persons employed in the dock-yards, which had formed a principal point of accusation against government, he demanded, "Who ever dared to grant, or to deny, preferment to a workman, merely on account of his election interest? The man that dared so to act *ought to lose his head.*" Dundas, being likewise compelled by some allusions made to similar interference in Scotland among the workmen in the dock-yards of that kingdom, reprobated Mr. Crewe's *bill* in terms of contemptuous levity. "I defy," exclaimed he, "any man to stand up and *show his face boldly* in defence of such a proposition, which attempts to fix a stigma on a number of individuals, merely because they are employed in his majesty's service. But it appears to me that, whenever gentlemen are out of place, they conceive it necessary, in order to amuse the public, to serve up in this house *a dish of disfranchisements.*"

Such was the state of the discussion when Sheridan took part in it, levelling his first strokes at Dundas. "Truly," observed he, "may that learned gentleman assert, that he never maintains any position without being ready to *show his face boldly* at the same time: for I believe the house will agree with me in admitting, that he never advances an argument, however irreconcilable to reason it may be, on which he is not prepared to *put a good countenance.* With respect to his *dish of disfran-*

*chisements*, he cannot surely have forgotten that he was first induced to *nibble* a little at a side-dish; and afterwards prevailed on to *sit down* to a whole course of those ingredients, at the time when his friend near him served up his *grand entertainment* of parliamentary reform. The principal object of that reform was expressly to *disfranchise*, not merely a particular class of men, but a numerous body of voters from many different boroughs." Pitt contradicting him across the table, and flatly denying the fact, because it was intended to remunerate them, Sheridan, wholly unmoved, resumed his speech. "I thank the right honourable gentleman," said he, "for his correction. I now recollect that the people were to be *paid* for relinquishing their franchises, which still better accords with my argument; because every one knows that where money is in the case, the *learned* gentleman will be better pleased. Is it, however, possible to state any proposition more unconstitutional, or more repugnant to freedom, than that of purchasing with a bribe the unalienable right of voting at elections?" Having made these severe and personal observations on the two ministers, he turned to Lord Mulgrave, who sate near them. "The noble lord," continued Sheridan, "has remarked, when alluding to the treatment of persons employed in the dock-yards, that any man who should use the influence of the crown for the purpose of obtaining a vote *deserved* to lose his

head." Lord Mulgrave immediately rising, denied that the words were accurately cited, as he had said, *ought* to lose his head. Not more disconcerted at this second interruption than he had been by the first, Sheridan, without altering a muscle of his countenance, only observed, "I am happy to find that the expression used was *ought*; because, if it had been *would* have lost his head, the learned gentleman seated on the treasury bench would not have had on this evening *a face to have shewn among us*."

We must admit that it appears hardly possible to compress more wit into a smaller compass than is exhibited in this speech. No other individual among the opposition possessed the same talent, combined with good humour, in a similar degree. Burke displayed indeed, at times, the utmost brilliancy of fancy, enriched from every source of antient or of modern learning; but he wanted Sheridan's suavity, self-command, and imperturbability. Even Fox did not manifest the same playful gaiety, which extorted a smile from the very individual who experienced its severity. Sheridan received from nature the faculty of delighting, and inserting the lancet, at the same instant. So, it may be said, did Lord North. Nor can it be denied but that most amiable nobleman had already played his part on the theatre of parliament, and of public life. Neither his health, nor the recollection of the great offices that he had

once filled in that assembly, allowed him to attend in his place, except on occasions of emergency. Courtenay approached nearer to Sheridan than any man on the opposition benches. He wanted nevertheless the nice touch of the author of the "School for Scandal." Courtenay might be said to bear to Sheridan the place and the analogy which is found in antiquity between the two great Roman satirists;—one, the elegant writer of the Augustan age; the other, formed of coarser and bolder materials, to lash the vices of the time of Domitian. Sheridan's wit extorted no reply from ministers. Pitt, Dundas, and Lord Mulgrave, all preserved silence. The division, however, supplied every deficiency, Marsham's *motion* being negatived by nearly three to one. It became evident that the spirit of reform was far on its decline. In 1782, the proposition would have been carried almost without debate or opposition.

Among the individuals who spoke against it on that evening was Sir Charles Middleton, comptroller of the navy, and member for Rochester. I principally mention him here, because he forms the most extraordinary instance of the power of that goddess, whose divinity is denied by Juvenal, which can be found throughout the long reign of George the Third. He possessed plain sound sense, an unexceptionable moral character, and high professional merit; having risen with distinction to the rank of an admiral, and having likewise been



created a baronet as early as the year 1781. Down to 1791 he continued to occupy the post of comptroller of the navy, which he quitted with great reputation, retiring from public life and service to his seat at Barham, in Kent. His career of ambition seemed to be then terminated. But Fortune manifested in his person her empire over human affairs. Lord Melville being impeached in the spring of 1805, and thereby rendered incapable of longer remaining at the head of the admiralty, it became necessary without loss of time to supply the vacancy. Nor was the selection easy; since, on one hand, the person chosen to fill so important a department, in a time of imminent national danger, was required to possess conspicuous recognized ability in the line of his profession, united, on the other, with the most steady as well as implicit adherence to ministers. These qualities were found in Sir Charles Middleton. He joined to them a third recommendation; his mother, Helen Dundas, having been a relative of Lord Melville. I believe they stood in the degree of second cousins to each other. Sir Charles Middleton, who many years earlier, at the age of sixty-five, had retreated from official life, and who little expected to be called back to it, found himself, at seventy-nine, summoned to fill the high post from which his friend was driven. His advanced age formed no impediment, as his faculties remained unimpaired. The dignity of a privy counsellor

and a cabinet minister ; the British peerage, with remainder to his daughter, he having no male issue ; together with the office of first lord of the admiralty ; — all these honours and emoluments extended themselves at the feet of a man verging towards fourscore. He proved himself not unworthy of them. He continued, indeed, only about nine or ten months in his elevated situation ; but during that short period took place the illustrious victory of Trafalgar. Lord Barham survived till the year 1813, dying at the very protracted period of eighty-seven years. Edwin Lascelles, Sir James Peachey, and Welbore Ellis, had all passed their seventieth year, when respectively sent up to the house of lords. But they form no parallel to the instance before us, which, considered under its various aspects, may not be again realized in the lapse of many ages.

*April.*—Burke, in bringing forward the impeachment of Hastings, was actuated by some of the most elevated, but likewise by some of the least commendable, motives or feelings that can meet in man. He always reminded me of the image which Nebuchadnezzar sees in his dream, recorded by the prophet Daniel ; “ whose brightness was excellent,” and whose “ head was of fine gold ;” but whose “ feet were part of iron and part of clay.” Great inconsistencies and contradictions unquestionably met in Burke. Like the celebrated Bishop of Chiapa, whose life was passed in

efforts to ameliorate the condition of the natives of the New World, and to bring to justice the Spaniards who tyrannized or massacred them ; so Burke, during many years, endeavoured to rescue the inhabitants of Hindostan from British severities or extortions. Nor do I mean to deny that he was impelled by very benign and enlarged principles ; but they became mingled in their course with much infirmity. His resentments, enmities, and prejudices, assuming the appearance of virtue, often obscured his judgment, irritated his temper, and rendered him frequently inaccessible to candour or to reason. Even his private pecuniary embarrassments contributed to sharpen his disposition. The pay-office, which he had twice occupied, without retaining it beyond a few months, had left painful recollections in his mind. I believe the Marquis of Rockingham did not bequeath him any testamentary mark of regard, except cancelling the sum due to him from Burke. Old age was fast advancing, and no prospect of a return to power presented itself. Though he was not encumbered with a numerous family, yet he had one son, in whom *he* beheld every virtue and every talent, while other persons saw in him only a young man of common ability. For his advancement and establishment in life, Burke felt intense anxiety. All these circumstances combined to bereave him of that complacency and suavity, which office, prosperity, and wealth are formed to

produce. If the *coalition* administration had retained possession of the government, and of course Burke had continued to occupy Rigby's place, with its splendid emoluments, Hastings would undoubtedly have been recalled, with marks of ministerial censure: but I greatly question whether the paymaster of the forces would, in opposition to the king's opinions, have drawn up and presented articles of impeachment against him. We have seen how easily Burke was induced to lay aside his intentions of impeaching Lord North in 1782, as soon as that nobleman relinquished his place. Yet, if Hastings had oppressed, he had not lost, an empire.

Fox, in lending his powerful co-operation towards the prosecution, participated in no degree the antipathies of Burke: he was composed of more malleable materials. Exclusion from place, aggravated by poverty, had neither rendered him bitter nor implacable. But, during successive years, he had been accustomed to declaim against Hastings, whose policy he considered as ambitious, imbued with the spirit of conquest, oppressive, and even sanguinary in certain instances. He could not retract his declarations on these points, even if he had wished to do it. As little could he abandon Burke, or leave him unaided, to carry on the impeachment. Such a line of conduct, which must have divided them for ever, would have produced a fatal schism in the party.

It was moreover evident that whichever side ministers took, whether they protected or sacrificed Hastings, they must encounter great embarrassments. By sheltering him, they would incur the odium of shielding from enquiry and punishment a great public functionary, accused of enormous crimes. By delivering up to the rage of his enemies a man who had preserved India, at the very time when we lost America, and of whose public merits the king entertained so high an opinion, they might risk the royal displeasure, with all its consequences. Fox himself had been wrecked by the *East India bill*; and Pitt might commit a similar error. These motives, as I have always conceived, more than any thorough conviction of Hastings's criminality, propelled Fox to support the impeachment. Hastings himself, as I know, was fully persuaded that Fox had said, "I would rather be the defender than the accuser of the late governor-general." Even though he should, however, have uttered such a sentiment, which is very possible,—for he was often imprudent and unguarded,—yet it would prove nothing in the present question. But I am nevertheless of opinion, that if Lord Pigot or Lord Macartney, with both of whom Fox was intimately connected, had been accused, as governors of Madras, with the commission of acts similar to those attributed to Hastings, instead of joining to prosecute and punish,

he would, as far as in him lay, have extended to them assistance and protection.

No man could doubt, after Sheridan's own confession, made in the house of commons, scarcely four weeks earlier, that *he* would willingly have extended impunity and oblivion to Hastings. His own principles of moral action were too relaxed, to impel him on a parliamentary prosecution for measures which, even if culpable, were adopted under circumstances of great public exigency, where the existence of our East India dominions was at stake. In bending all the charms of his persuasive eloquence, as he did, to prove Hastings's criminality before his judges in Westminster-hall, Sheridan only acted from a spirit of party, sustained by attachment to Fox. Probably he was not insensible to the display of his talents likewise, on such a theatre, before an audience composed of both sexes, including all that was dignified in Great Britain. But Sheridan partook neither of the elevated feelings of Burke, nor had imbibed his prejudices, nor was actuated by his personal resentments.

Widely different were the motives which impelled Francis. In *his* bosom appeared to be concentrated all the hostile recollections which our nature can cherish against any individual. During successive years he had, in concert with Clavering and Monson, opposed Hastings's measures in Ben-

gal. After the decease of his two colleagues in the supreme council, he had continued the same systematic resistance to the governor-general. Private enmity became superadded to political difference of opinion: they went out, fought, and Francis was wounded. Time seemed to have diffused no balm into the wound; it remained still fresh as on the day when it had been inflicted. His own words, on the supposition that Francis was *Junius*, addressed to Sir William Draper, might be justly applied to himself: "If I understand your character," says Junius, "there is in your own breast a repository in which your resentments may be safely laid up for future occasions, and preserved without the hazard of diminution." With equal truth it might have been maintained of Francis, that all his animosities lived and breathed in his speeches, unallayed by the lapse of years. Nor could he plead, like Burke, that poverty had chilled his blood, or rendered it acrimonious. Francis brought home from the East a very ample, or rather a splendid competence; and while Burke occupied, when in London, a small lodging in Charles Street, St. James's Square, Francis inhabited a house in Upper Harley Street, from which he subsequently removed to a noble mansion in St. James's Square. Such was the difference which fortune had established between these two distinguished men. I never accounted Lord North among the number of

Hastings's prosecutors, though he lent his name to the impeachment.

*5th and 6th April.*—Two conversations, rather than debates, took place at this time relative to the deficiency in the civil list, which amounted, as I have already observed, to more than two hundred thousand pounds. Powis, after commenting with asperity on the causes that had produced such a debt, mentioned the expensive and inefficient embassy of Lord Chesterfield, as meriting reprehension. It appeared that no less a sum than twenty-five thousand pounds had been expended on that useless and premature appointment. Nor did Eden's mission to Paris escape censure, though every part of the house joined with the minister in acknowledging his aptitude for such a negotiation. Sheridan and Fox availed themselves of the occasion, for bringing to public notice the establishment of the Prince of Wales ; no doubt with a view to sound the inclinations of parliament upon the subject. They represented that fifty thousand pounds a year constituted an income utterly inadequate to supporting his dignity. "In touching on a matter of such delicacy," observed Fox, "it is not so much from motives of gratitude for the confidence with which that royal personage honours me, nor from the affection excited by his amiable qualities, as from my conviction that the dignity of the crown, and even the national advantage,



require that the heir-apparent should be enabled to live, not merely in ease, but in splendour. Under George the First, when the civil list amounted only to seven hundred thousand pounds a year, the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Second, had an allowance of one hundred thousand; and now, when, in consequence of the suppressions made in the king's household, the civil list may be fairly estimated at nine hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year, only fifty thousand are given to the Prince of Wales. If his majesty, as is evident by the demand of this evening, cannot make the former sum cover his expenses, how can it be expected that his royal highness is to live upon the last-mentioned income? I well know that the late Prince of Wales, Frederick, had at first no larger establishment; but it was soon augmented, and the expences of every article of life are prodigiously encreased since that period."

These facts and arguments, which appeared to me at the time, and still impress me, as full of weight, made no impression on the chancellor of the exchequer. Entrenching himself behind the throne, he replied that "he was not instructed to make any communication to the house, respecting the branches of the royal family; and that he should avoid the presumption of expressing any private opinion upon the subject." Not a single county member, nor country gentleman of

any description, rose to support Fox's representations. One individual only, Alderman Newnham, a member for the city of London, stated his conviction that the sum allowed to the heir-apparent was universally regarded as unequal to the maintenance of his dignity. Fox, at the conclusion of his speech, admitted that the only becoming mode of bringing the business before the house would be by a message from the crown. "I hope," added he, "that ministers will so advise his majesty; but, if they do not, I pledge myself that I will, in some shape or other, before the end of the session, lay the matter before this assembly." Pitt remained silent. Unquestionably, an economical Prince of Wales, or a Prince of Wales deeply penetrated with a sense of his duties, might have subsisted on the allowance made him, however unequal it was to a display of magnificence. But Carlton-house exhibited a perpetual scene of excess, unrestrained by any wise superintendence. Entertainments of the most expensive description; architectural decorations and embellishments, made on a scale of extraordinary splendour;—these gratifications demanded adequate funds for their support. A large debt began to accumulate, which speedily subjected his royal highness to many of the inconveniencies, and to some of the disgraces, incurred by ordinary debtors. His friends and adherents filled the capital with complaints of the inadequate allowance made

him: but the king, who well knew that an augmentation of his income would only tend to strengthen the hands of opposition; and who perhaps suspected that some part of it might find its way into the pockets of Fox, or of Sheridan; remained inflexible on the subject.

*11th and 12th April.*—No individual connected with government performed, during the course of the session, a more important, useful, and conspicuous part, than Jenkinson. I do not except the chancellor of the exchequer himself from this observation. Jenkinson could support indeed no comparison whatever with Pitt in eloquence; but his intimate knowledge of trade, matured by experience, and by communications with every source of information, rendered him an invaluable support to ministers. The cry of *secret influence*, which during Lord North's administration made Jenkinson unpopular, had become almost extinct, while his talents rose every day in the public estimation. Before the end of March he brought forward a proposition for regulating the Newfoundland fishery; an object become doubly valuable to Great Britain since our recent loss of the Trans-Atlantic colonies. In developing the actual state of that branch of national wealth, and defining the principles on which alone it could henceforward be retained against the rivalities of other nations, he shewed his profound acquaintance with the subject. Instructed by

the recent emancipation of America, he pointed out the danger of *colonizing* Newfoundland; which, if treated as a colony, he said, would infallibly follow in a few years the example of New England; recommending an opposite system of policy, as the only mode of preserving the fisheries. Sir Grey Cooper, who since Eden's defection supplied in some measure his place, not only concurred on every point with Jenkinson, but passed the highest encomiums on his sound views of commercial prosperity. No opposition arose from any part of the house.

Previous to the Easter recess, he exhibited two other equally striking proofs of ability. The first of these propositions, which had for its object a revisal of the trade and navigation laws, enabled him to display a wonderful extent of information. Having traced the origin and progress of those laws, their operation on our commerce, and their present defects, he finally suggested the alterations necessary to be made in the system. His views and reflections were equally enlarged, as they were consoling to the nation. "If proper means," he observed, "could be devised for securing to Great Britain the navigation trade; though we had recently lost a vast dominion in America, we might almost be said to have gained an empire." All his plans appeared to be so beneficial, and he manifested so much readiness to submit them to the severest examination, not only of

the house, but of every merchant in the kingdom, previous to their final adoption, that they experienced no impediment. — The last proof of talent exhibited by Jenkinson at this time, was in laying open the state of the Greenland fishery ; which he performed in the same lucid, well-digested, and perspicuous manner, accompanied with details of the most minute description. The measure that he proposed, though it gave rise to a long discussion, yet was adopted by a large majority. It was not, indeed, from Fox, or from Fox's friends, than any objections to the plan arose. The doubts started came from other quarters, and originated principally in local feelings or prejudices. Jenkinson's abilities extorted universal respect, and rendered it evident that the favour which he had enjoyed during so many years at St. James's reposed on better foundations than the servile assiduities of a courtier, or the capricious predilection of a king.

*26th April.*—The impeachment of Hastings now began to engage, and to absorb, universal attention. Burke having delivered in two more charges against him, and promising to produce others without loss of time, Major Scott instantly presented a petition on the part of the late governor-general. Its object, which was "to obtain the permission of being heard in his defence against the several articles, and to be allowed a copy of them," gave rise to a most animated debate. Con-

clusions diametrically opposite were drawn by Fox and by Pitt from the same premises; the latter expressing his assent to the prayer of the petition as founded on precedents extracted from the Journals. Fox, though he did not oppose the motion for hearing Hastings in his defence, yet loudly inveighed against granting him copies of the charges. While this contest took place, a sort of episode suddenly diverted, during a considerable time, the attention of the assembly from Hastings to an unexpected quarter. Martin, member for Tewksbury, a man whom I have already had occasion more than once to mention; whose views were confined, but always inflexibly upright; interposed in the discussion. "I have not as yet, Mr. Speaker," said he, "made up my mind on the present subject; but, whenever this prosecution shall be disposed of, there still remains one to be undertaken in justice to the country. I allude to the noble lord in the blue ribband, who has repeatedly challenged enquiry. I have long thought that such an enquiry ought to be instituted. So unfortunate, however, has been the state of party during several years, that the noble lord well knows *he may bid the country do that, which the dignity of this house, and my respect for them, prohibits me from mentioning within these walls.*" Lord North, on ordinary occasions, would probably have met the attack of Martin with his characteristic wit and humour; weapons which

he had always at command, and with which he had already gently chastized his present adversary, to the no small entertainment of the audience, when formerly assailed by him on the same topic. But the affront was conveyed in words so indecorous, as induced him to prefer a more grave reply. Rising as soon as Martin finished, he complained that "*allusions made in gross and vulgar language*" should thus be reiterated; equally unworthy of the house to hear, and indecent on the part of the individual by whom they were uttered. He then called on men of every description, to say whether the majority of that house, the actual ministers, or any of the great authorities in existence, could be considered so partial to him, as to shield him from impeachment if he merited it? The weapon which Lord North disdained or declined to use, Burke however took up, wielding it with equal ease and effect. "I sincerely wish," observed he, "that the bird who uniformly sings one and the same tune would take it in a gentler key. The cuckoo's note, I grant, is uniform; but it is gentle. Now, though the bird in question can sing only one note, and that note, like the cuckoo's, ungracious to the *married coalition ear*; yet the house will thank him for correcting the *harshness* of his song, and for giving it in a *milder tone*."

Having by this pleasantry turned the laugh against Martin, Burke resumed his serious de-

meanour. "As to the prosecution of the noble lord seated near me," continued he, "whatever I might have once intended, I should not now be prompt to impeach a person whom I am so happy as to rank among my friends. Besides, when I look opposite, and see the chancellor of the exchequer, who has declared systematically against all retrospect on other national concerns, I dare not undertake it; especially on beholding the two powerful supporters between whom he is placed this evening." Dundas sate on Pitt's right hand, and Jenkinson on his left. "Three such opponents would awe me into silence. I will however confess, that thinking the measures pursued during the contest with America dangerous to the constitution, and pernicious, *I had at one time drawn up seven distinct articles of impeachment.* But, only one among them in any degree affected the noble lord. When I found the system relinquished, I forgot the past evils. *The Marquis of Rockingham indeed advised me to abandon all idea of impeachment, and took from me the papers. I have since vainly endeavoured to find them.*" In the disclosure thus made relative to Lord Rockingham, much secret history was divulged. It became evident that Burke's patron saw the impossibility of separating the sovereign from his minister; George the Third, from Lord North. In fact, every man of common information knew that the American war was waged and maintained by his



majesty, far more than by his ministers. He supported and propelled the cabinet, who, on the other hand, had good experience of his firmness. An attempt therefore to bring Lord North, or Lord George Germain, or the Earl of Sandwich, to the block, must have rent in pieces the whole frame of Lord Rockingham's government. For the king would never have imitated the example of Charles the First towards Lord Strafford. His principles would not have allowed him to incur his own reprobation or contempt. This fact the marquis well knew, as he did equally Burke's violence and intractability. In order, therefore, to disarm a man whom he could not altogether govern by reason, or control by authority, he got possession of the papers in question, which he subsequently withheld, or destroyed. If Fox and Burke had possessed the marquis's prudence, combined with his moderation, they might not have passed nearly their whole lives on the opposition bench.

It being at length carried without any division, that Hastings should be heard in his defence, and that copies of the charges should be granted him ; a new debate arose respecting the mode and order of proceeding. Kenyon strongly maintained that the house ought not to advance another step in the prosecution, till the late governor-general had been brought before them : while Jenkinson, who hitherto could only be said to have taken an in-

direct part in his favour, now rising, decidedly objected to the reception of evidence. Thus opposed, Burke gave way to all the acrimony and irritation of his character. He who, when Lord North was attacked by Martin, could call ridicule to his aid, and press into his service Shakspear's "cuckoo song," let loose upon Kenyon and Jenkinson the utmost efforts of his indignation. "The learned gentleman," exclaimed he, addressing his observations to the master of the rolls, "may repeat his practice of embarrassing the discussion; of varying his opinion, and suggesting different advice according to circumstances: I will not abandon the cause. I consider one arm as already lopped off. If I lose a leg, I will nevertheless persevere. Even if deprived of both, I will fight, like Witherington, on my stumps." Towards Jenkinson he was still more personal. "Judging from all that I have heard on the present evening," said Burke, "I fear it is intended to quash the prosecution. It is indeed evident, by the language of a gentleman *who is commonly supposed to have been the sinister adviser of his majesty*;—though I by no means assert the fact, or that he ever offered other than good advice;—it is however evident that *one half* of my charges are already struck with the dead palsy."—"The failure of the charges is impossible. They contain matter which no sophistry can defeat. If therefore the house shall think proper to crush

the proceeding, the disgrace will be theirs, and not mine. I have done my duty; and disabled as I may be, I will persevere."

Such was the state of the discussion, when two gentlemen of the long robe successively addressed the house. The first, Bearcroft, though encumbered with a mass of flesh, possessed great intellectual powers, and looked forward confidently to the highest honours of his profession; which he would probably have reached, if his career had not been cut short by death. Viewing the case, not through the optics of a moralist, but with the eye of a statesman, he endeavoured to convince his audience, that the late governor-general might prove the accusations to be altogether irrelevant, or at least destitute of criminality. Widely opposite were the opinions delivered by Hardinge, solicitor-general to the queen; who having denied that the charges were in any degree unintelligible, while at the same time he admitted that they were diffuse; "With respect," continued he, "to the argument, that even although imputations so serious could be proved, yet they might and would be overbalanced by the public services of the accused person, I can subscribe to no such doctrine. Never will I admit the justification, which in technical phrase is denominated a *set-off*, to form any legitimate defence! In cases of a criminal nature, or where specific delinquency can be proved, no *set-off* will

satisfy my mind. I remember, many years ago, a proceeding similar to the present, in which the sort of balance now pleaded was successfully urged, but greatly, in my opinion, to the disgrace of this assembly. The case to which I allude, was that prosecution commenced against an individual of high rank and character at the time; and who, though now no more, yet still maintains a great name in the world. The facts, and those too of an enormous description, were proved. But, *an honourable general, and a noble lord, have yet an account to settle, for having admitted the whole to be done away by a set-off.* I date from that circumstance, every event which has since taken place injurious to the national character in the East." This most pointed allusion to Lord North's and General Burgoyne's conduct, when Lord Clive was criminally attacked in the house, produced no ordinary sensation, they being both present: but it did not provoke from either of them any notice or reply. On the division, it was nevertheless determined to hear no more witnesses till Hastings should have appeared at the bar. It would be nugatory to deny that Hardinge's opinions were not merely heard with respect, but sunk deep into the public mind. All those persons who considered Hastings's actions as amenable to the bar of private conscience, or to parliamentary enquiry, rather than as measures of state which circumstances authorized;

necessarily adopted the standard of moral rectitude and justice, as the only criterion of his future acquittal or condemnation.

*1st May.*—These preliminary steps being adjusted, Mr. Hastings made his appearance before the house. Curiosity, stimulated by enmity, or by friendship, in many individuals, procured on the occasion a very numerous attendance. His entrance excited a strong and a general emotion. It was to me a painful spectacle to behold a man, who during twelve years had governed the rich and extensive provinces of Asia, from the mouths of the Ganges to Dehli,—and who, without a metaphor, might be said to have occupied the throne of Timur,—now, when his period of life seemed to demand repose, and when he might have anticipated honours or rewards, dragged before a popular assembly, there to defend himself against impeachment. His person, if not dignified, was interesting, and his look commanding, as if accustomed to power. In thus pleading before the commons, he lost the advantage enjoyed by Lord Clive; and by Rumbold; who, being both members of the assembly which instituted an enquiry into their public conduct, could mix personally with their accusers, reply to their allegations on the moment, and correct or efface any unjust imputation. Lord Clive had moreover secured in Wedderburn an advocate of consummate parliamentary, as well as legal talents. Nor did Sir Thomas Rumbold want

a powerful supporter in the person of Rigby, who, though then no longer paymaster of the forces, yet well knew the modes of softening animosities, and of dextrously removing prejudices. Lord Mansfield, the archbishop of York, the chancellor, and many other persons of the highest rank or consideration, strongly attached to Hastings, whatever services they could render him elsewhere, became powerless in the house of commons. Jenkinson, Kenyon, and Bearcroft might, indeed, each be regarded as friendly; but they wanted the personal stimulus by which Wedderburn and Rigby had been propelled. All these circumstances were not duly weighed by the advisers of the governor-general, who having passed his best years out of his native country, knew London and parliament only by description.

Burke always endeavoured to establish a similarity between the prætor of Sicily accused by Cicero, and the governor-general impeached by himself. It would, however, have been much easier to demonstrate the contrast exhibited by the two individuals. Verres was brought before the Roman senate by the Sicilians themselves, for acts of rapine and oppression. Hastings had quitted India amidst the affectionate approbation of all ranks, Asiatic as well as European. Verres returned to Rome laden with wealth, of which he expended a considerable portion in procuring defenders. Hastings revisited England, not indeed

poor, but with only a moderate competence; while Barwell, though only a contemporary member of the supreme council, had amassed some hundred thousands. Even Francis was a far richer man than the governor-general. The acts of rapacity or extortion committed by the Roman were perpetrated from base and sordid motives; while the Englishman, even in those fines which he imposed or levied on the princes of Indostan, carried the sums so raised into the company's treasury. Lastly, Verres, conscious of his enormities, and anticipating his final condemnation, dared not abide the issue of his trial, but, quitting Italy, became an exile. Hastings, on the contrary, after presenting for many years a political mark, against which the greatest talents and eloquence of the country directed its keenest shafts, was acquitted by his judges. Between Verres and Rumbold it will be readily admitted that there existed great analogy. If we would seek in antiquity any case bearing a strong resemblance to that of Hastings among us, we must remount more than four centuries beyond the Christian æra. Pericles, accused of mismanagement in conducting the military and civil affairs of Athens entrusted to his guidance, pleading his cause before the Athenian people, presents some points that recall to our minds the governor-general of Bengal. On the present occasion, every mark of attention and consideration was shown by the

house of commons to Hastings, compatible with the forms of that assembly. He was allowed a chair; and a son of the archbishop of York, who had formerly been resident at Benares, attended on him, for the purpose of supplying him with the documents or papers requisite to his justification. In reply to his request of being permitted to assist his memory by *reading* his answer to the charges exhibited, the Speaker informed him that he was at liberty to avail himself of any aid which he might judge necessary for his defence.

Having first returned his acknowledgments to the house for their indulgence in hearing him at so early a stage of the prosecution, he then proceeded to read his exculpation. But its effect on a popular assembly accustomed to splendid displays of eloquence, was tame and tedious after the lapse of the first hour. He began by remarking on the singularity of the present proceeding, instituted against a man who had received from his employers the most unequivocal and flattering testimonies of their satisfaction. "I left Bengal," said he, "followed by the loudest proofs of universal gratitude; and since I landed in England, I have had the unanimous thanks of the court of directors for my services of five-and-thirty years. Furnished with such proofs of the approbation of those for whose benefit I had conducted the affairs of India, it did not occur to my mind that any other person *could* urge an accusation



against me. Much less did I conceive that high crimes and misdemeanours could be alleged in this house, as grounds for my impeachment before the peers. Doubtless, in the course of my administration, I have committed many errors; but I have endeavoured so to conduct the government of India, that it might prove beneficial to the company at home, while it diffused repose and felicity abroad. I am conscious that by standing forward as I now do, I may furnish proofs of my own misconduct. If, however, it is desirable to disclose the facts and measures that took place while I held the first office in Bengal, I wish to make the disclosure in this manner, whatever personal disadvantages may accrue from it to my cause, during the course of the present proceedings."

When Hastings had concluded his general observations on the prosecution, he produced separate answers to each of the charges. But, as his own powers became unequal to a long continuance of such exertion, he soon availed himself of Mr. Markham's assistance. After more than five hours had been thus employed, during which time a considerable diminution took place in the number of auditors, the chancellor of the exchequer moved an adjournment. On the ensuing day Hastings resumed his defence; which being terminated, he was desired to withdraw. Burke then briefly addressed the house, deprecating any com-

ment on the recent justification, as altogether premature, but recommending to every individual present a deliberate perusal of the whole proceeding. Not a word was uttered in reply. It may justly be questioned whether Hastings was well advised in desiring to be heard at the bar. In fact, he derived no advantage from his personal appearance. How, indeed, could he expect to produce conviction in the minds of an assembly whose members possessed collectively so imperfect a knowledge of the country, policy, or government of Hindostan; to whom, neither the Rohillas, nor the Rajah of Benares, nor the Nabob of Oude, conveyed any definite idea? Hastings's friends amounted only to an inconsiderable number, not exceeding probably seventy; though, if ministers joined them, no doubt could be entertained of the charges being rejected by a great majority. But how would Pitt and Dundas act? What criterion of merit or demerit, of crime or of innocence, would they adopt? Would they judge on the general principles, or on detached features, of the governor-general's public conduct? Would Bearcroft's or Hardinge's standard be preferred? On these points profound ignorance prevailed. Hastings's adherents, relying nevertheless on the favourable sentiments hitherto exhibited or expressed by Pitt towards him on various occasions, anticipated with sanguine hopes, that whenever the separate charges should be brought forward,

the minister would take a decided part in his behalf. A short time demonstrated how erroneously they had embraced these opinions.

*May.*—London presented during the spring of 1786 a scene of general dissipation at the west end of the town. All the gloom which the disasters of the American war had diffused during successive years over the capital, seemed to have dispersed like a dream. The Prince of Wales, then in the prime of youth, led the way in every species of pleasure, and in many species of excess. His father, aware of the injury which such an example might produce among the younger branches of his family, had early removed his second and third sons from England: Prince Frederic being sent in December 1781 to Hanover; while William Henry, bred to the navy, pursued his professional career at a distance from his native country. Mrs. Fitzherbert, commonly regarded, if not as the heir-apparent's *wife*, yet as united to him by a ceremony substituted in place of a legal marriage, received in all companies the consideration and respect which the sanctity of such a supposed connexion was calculated to inspire. I have already mentioned that she was in her second widowhood when she became known to him. It is a curious fact, that Edward the Black Prince espoused a lady who, like Mrs. Fitzherbert, had previously given her hand to two husbands. "The fair maid of Kent," as she was denomi-

nated, mother of Richard the Second, stood in that predicament. There appears, indeed, to have been among the kings, and in the royal family of England, an extraordinary predilection for widows. Not to mention the unfortunate consort of Edward the Fourth, and Henry the Eighth's last queen; the three uncles of the Prince of Wales, all, either avowedly or secretly, acted the same part. I know that Lady Mary Coke considered herself united to Edward, Duke of York, who died in 1767 at Monaco, by as legitimate a union as the Duchesses of Gloucester or of Cumberland were united to their respective husbands. She was, indeed, much higher born than Miss Walpole or Miss Luttrell, being daughter of John, the celebrated Duke of Argyle, and she possessed extraordinary personal beauty. At more than seventy years of age, when I have been in company with her, she preserved the cheerfulness and vivacity of youth.

Cumberland-house, in Pall-Mall, (now the department of the ordnance,) might then be considered as the central point of elegant amusement in the metropolis. The Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, after passing some years on the Continent,—principally at Avignon, with a view to the re-establishment of his finances,—on their return to England opened their house. A crowd of distinguished persons, male and female, filled the apartments once every week. That the duke was a very

weak man, the circumstances attending his unfortunate connexion with Lady Grosvenor, and his marriage with Mrs. Horton, sufficiently attest. Yet, limited as his faculties were, his manner rendered them apparently meaner than they would otherwise have been esteemed. The same remark might be applied to the king his brother, who, had he possessed the grace of the Prince of Wales, would have impressed all who approached him with a conviction of his capacity. The Duchess of Cumberland, like almost every individual of the Luttrell family, by no means wanted talents: but they were more specious than solid; better calculated for show than for use, for captivating admiration than for exciting esteem. Her personal charms, allowance being made for the injury which they had sustained from time,—for in 1786 she was no longer young,—fully justified the duke's passion. No woman of her time performed the honours of her own drawing-room with more affability, ease, and dignity. The king held her in great alienation, because he believed that she lent herself to facilitate, or to gratify, the Prince of Wales's inclinations on some points beyond the limits of propriety; Carlton and Cumberland houses communicating behind by the gardens. Lady Elizabeth Luttrell, a younger sister of the duchess,—their father having been raised in the preceding year from the rank of an Irish viscount to the dignity of an earl of the same

kingdom,—was domiciliated at Cumberland-house. She inherited no portion of the duchess's beauty, elegance, or prudence. Coarse, and destitute of softness in her manners, wanting principle, and devoured by a rage for play, she finally closed her life in a manner the most humiliating as well as tragical.

The *Luttrells* had succeeded, under George the Third, to the character for eccentricity enjoyed by the *Herveys* during the two preceding reigns; of which last-mentioned family the Dowager Viscountess Townsend observed, that "God had created men, and women, and *Herveys*." The present Earl of Carhampton,—who, as Colonel Luttrell, acted so conspicuous a part half a century ago, when he opposed Wilkes at Brentford, in the memorable contest for Middlesex,—still survives, in the possession of all his intellectual faculties, though advanced beyond his seventieth year. In his person, he was rather below than above the middle size; but active, of a pleasing figure, and a high spirit; verifying the adage of "*Petite mine, et grand jeu*." He possessed a mind cast in a very original mould, though uncultivated; and he was an indefatigable votary of pleasure. In 1812, soon after the restrictions imposed by parliament on the regent were withdrawn, Lord Carhampton lying in an apparently hopeless state, at his house in Bruton-street, Berkeley-square, where he laboured under a dangerous internal malady,

intelligence of his decease was prematurely carried to Carlton-house. The regent, who was at table when the report arrived, lending rather too precipitate credit to the information, immediately gave away his regiment, *the Carabineers*, to one of the company, a general officer ; and he lost not a moment in kissing his royal highness's hand, on the appointment. No sooner had the report reached Lord Carhampton, than he instantly dispatched a friend to Pall-Mall, empowered to deliver a message for the prince. In it he most respectfully protested, that far from being a dead man, he hoped to surmount his present disease ; and therefore humbly entreated him to dispose of any other regiment in the service, except *the Carabineers*. Lord Carhampton humorously added, that his royal highness might rest assured, he would give special directions to his attendants not to lose a moment, after it could be ascertained that he was really dead, in conveying the news to Carlton-house.

The residence of the French ambassador at Hyde Park Corner formed, in 1786, another rallying point of pleasure. Ever since the conclusion of peace between the two crowns, Count d'Adhemar filled that distinguished post, to which the friendship of the Duchess de Polignac and the protection of the queen had elevated him. Assuredly he never would have been sent by Henry the Fourth to James the First ; nor selected by

Louis the Fourteenth to manage the interests of France at the court of Charles the Second. The business of the embassy was principally conducted by his secretary, Barthelemy, who has since performed a conspicuous part throughout the French Revolution. After having been banished to the coast of Guiana, he still survives, respected under every government to which France has been subjected during the last five-and-twenty years. I knew him intimately; our acquaintance having commenced at Vienna, where he held the post of secretary to the Baron de Breteuil, ambassador from Louis the Sixteenth to the Empress Queen Maria Theresa. Barthelemy was a native of Provence, and nephew to the celebrated abbé of that name, author of the "*Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis*;" a work, the erudition and ingenuity of which have secured its fame to all future time. D'Adhemar, in conformity with the manners of France, where every species of amusement is customary on Sunday evenings, opened his house weekly on that night throughout the whole winter. About the same time he was attacked by a paralytic stroke, while standing in the drawing-room at St. James's. Such a disaster might naturally have suspended the entertainments at Hyde Park Corner: but, in order to conceal it as much as possible from his own court, and to impress the world with an idea that the attack could be only slight, his house was opened as usual. A faro table being



set in one of the apartments, the company punted at it, while the ambassador lay in an adjoining room attended by physicians. I witnessed the fact. His recovery proving merely temporary, the Chevalier de la Luzerne replaced him in the following year.

10th—31st May.—Throughout the whole month of May, Burke continued to call witnesses, for the purpose of proving various allegations of a criminal nature against Hastings. He then announced that he should commence his prosecution with the invasion of the territory of Rohilcund, commonly denominated *the Rohilla war*; and as soon as the house had disposed of the charge, he would proceed to *the affair of Benares, and rebellion of Cheyt Sing*. One, and only one debate of considerable interest took place, relative to the correspondence carried on between Mr. Middleton, while he was invested with the public character of minister at Lucknow, and the governor-general; which epistolary intercourse, Burke loudly insisted, ought to be produced. With that view, he moved that Middleton should be examined at the bar. But here he was again opposed by the master of the rolls. "I can only compare the demand," exclaimed Kenyon, "for the production of private papers from an individual criminally charged, with the avowed intention of criminating him, to the conduct of the Inquisition, where prisoners are put to the torture, in order to extort from them confes-

sions of guilt. Even the act of breaking open Algernon Sydney's private chamber, ransacking his most secret manuscripts, and seizing on an unpublished paper,—which subsequently formed the ground of his accusation, and ultimately the pretence for his execution,—yet was justifiable, when placed in comparison with the present attempt. Because, in Algernon Sydney's instance, danger to the state was pretended; whereas in this case no such pretext can be alledged, but an individual is to be made the instrument of his own conviction. Where then, I ask, is the man to be found who would reflectively do the thing which this house is now called on to authorize?"

Burke parried so severe an attack with the arms of wit, rather than with those of reason or of law. "Where," he asked, "was an inference to be drawn from his conduct that could be stigmatized as putting the accused to the torture? Why," continued he, "do I desire to see this correspondence? Is it to pry into the governor-general's amours, or to discover how many dancing-girls he had at his disposal? I do not want to know whether Mr. Hastings was afflicted with the malady of which Francis the First died, or what subjects of personal lamentation he might impart to Mr. Middleton. My object is to trace his official actions, and, by laying open his private instructions to the minister at Oude, to prove how he has dishonoured the British name, violated the

British faith, and degraded our **national** character." Pitt, while he expressed his disapprobation of an attempt at compelling the production of papers, for the purpose of criminating either Hastings or Middleton, softened nevertheless the asperity of Kenyon's animadversions on Burke's motion. "As to the *torture* of which my learned friend has made mention," added he, "it ought not to be interpreted literally, and means only an endeavour to elicit truth by unfair and illegal methods. Such modes, if used to compel from an individual written evidence against himself, would be as censurable, and as repugnant to justice, as personal torture to extort verbal confession. It is to the court of directors that application ought to be made for the papers in question, if they are of a public nature: for, on the supposition of their being really private, it would be highly unconstitutional, to call for them in any manner." The latter idea was, however, by Fox treated with scorn. "All the papers which we demand," said he, "are those belonging to *us*, to the state, and to the East India Company. If his majesty had called on *me*, when no longer secretary of state, to deliver up all the papers in my possession, must I not have obeyed? Were the case otherwise, the inquisitorial powers of this house are paralyzed, and no state delinquent can ever be prosecuted to conviction." Pitt's opinion was nevertheless finally adopted.

*1st and 2nd June.*—At length, after a delay of more than four months, Burke brought forward the first charge against Hastings; namely, *the Rohilla war*. Conscious how vast a responsibility he incurred, and how difficult a task he undertook, in endeavouring to point the indignation of parliament against a man who had maintained the authority of Great Britain over her possessions in the East, under circumstances of the greatest difficulty, and who had merited the acknowledgments of his employers; Burke called to his assistance all the resources of his comprehensive and illuminated mind. Nor did he despise those adventitious aids, which, by impressing his audience with a deep sense of the awful character of the prosecution itself, might awaken and rivet attention to his own efforts in the cause of national justice. Attracted by curiosity, or friendship, or party;—for, even in this instance, where party ought to have been wholly excluded, it still found entrance;—a very great concourse of members took their seats at the usual hour of business. Burke nevertheless entreated a pause for a few minutes; wishing, he said, that the numbers present might bear a becoming proportion to the importance of the matter. Rising when he saw that the benches were crowded, and every countenance indicated attention, he began by a solemn invocation to British justice, from the oppressions of British power. With an affecting earnestness, he at

the same time disclaimed all personal malevolence. "My anger," said he, "is not a private, but a public resentment. Not all the political changes of administration which we have witnessed during the last five years; neither summer retirement, nor winter occupation, nor the snow which nature has plentifully showered on my head during that period;—none of these has had power to cool the anger which as a public man I feel, but which in my individual capacity I never have nourished for a single instant."

After an exordium so well calculated to dispose the human heart, as well as understanding, for receiving those impressions which he wished to make on both; he proceeded to attack the governor-general as a culprit of the first magnitude and atrocity. Throwing over himself, as he well knew how to do, the classic mantle of antiquity, he depicted in glowing colours the noble and venerable character which attached to a public accuser under the Roman republic, so long as a spark of freedom still existed among that people. Unable to adduce any spontaneous testimony in support of the charges that he enumerated, he attempted to derive from the silence of the natives of Hindostan a proof of the alleged acts of violence and oppression. With great ingenuity he converted this negative presumption of innocence into an evidence of guilt. "When I consider," said he, "though Mr. Hastings remained during thirteen

years at the head of the Bengal government, that no one complaint has been yet transmitted home against him, I tremble at the enormous degree of power with which I have to contend." The defence recently delivered in by Hastings at the bar, Burke stigmatized as only a nominal exculpation, couched in language becoming an innocent and calumniated person, unjustly accused of heinous offences. No doubt there was to be traced in Hastings's manner, tone, and spirit on that occasion, as well as in the paper itself, something which justified Burke's comment, and which seemed to say, "I am not properly amenable to this tribunal before which I am summoned. My masters are the East India Company, not the house of commons. I have been approved by my employers; what has parliament to do with *me*?" It must indeed be accounted among the causes which eminently conduced to produce Hastings's impeachment, that he always appeared to consider the court of directors, or of proprietors, the only arbiters of his honour and fortune. To kings and to ministers he next extended his views; while he overlooked, or provoked, an individual who, though destitute of political power, and only supported by the prodigious energies of his mind, could nevertheless arrest a successful governor-general of India on his return to England, load him with accusations, drag him before the house of peers, tie up his property, restrain his liber-

ty, marshal the most resplendent talents of the country in array against him, and detain him, during successive years, in painful anxiety, under imputations of every description, notwithstanding his final acquittal.

Burke, having made these personal observations, then entered on the subject of the Rohilla war itself; which measure he held up to abhorrence, as an act of systematic violence, plunder, and wanton aggression, terminating in the extermination of the native inhabitants. A discussion ensued, which occupied two whole nights; the adjourned debate on the *first* of June not being finished till near eight in the morning of the *third*. Many individuals spoke on each side; but Pitt was not found among the number. Hardinge, in a speech of great length, admirably arranged and well digested, repeated all his preceding opinions. Having professed his conviction that an example was due to the national honour, ample proof of the facts charged by Burke having been laid before the house; he strongly adjured that assembly, as the great inquest of the realm, to put Hastings upon his account. "I am far from asserting," added he, "that the late governor-general, if impeached, will ever be convicted; but, should he be tried and acquitted, yet an example will have been made in his person. If, on the other hand, he is now screened, the disgrace of such a measure will cling, like a poisoned shirt,

to the British name and government for ages. It will survive the parties of the day, and form a lasting reproach to the country." On the composition denominated "Hastings's defence," Hardinge was, if possible, even more severe than Burke. "I see in it," said he, "a perfect character, drawn by the culprit himself; and that character is his own. Conscious triumph in the ability and success of all his measures pervades every sentence. He depicts the various classes of men throughout Hindostan, natives or Europeans, as equally impressed with a sort of superstitious faith in his genius and fortune. If we judge of his administration by the picture which he has here presented of himself, not a crime remains. All is talent, conducted by wisdom and merit." So deep was the impression made by Hardinge's speech, that when he concluded it at three o'clock in the morning, a general cry for adjournment arising, Pitt, though he declared his readiness to postpone the consideration of the subject to another evening, yet submitted, whether, if any of the numerous members whom he saw eager to speak might be desirous of replying instantly to particular points of the very able discourse just pronounced, permission ought not to be granted them for so doing before the house should adjourn. He could not express more unambiguously his high opinion of the effect produced by Hardinge's attack of Hastings.



If, however, that distinguished person found severe assailants, he likewise met with advocates of equal ability. Lord Mulgrave, during the first discussion, and Mr. William Grenville, in the course of the second, each undertook from the treasury bench his justification. Fox having called on Dundas to come forward, and either to condemn the Rohilla war, as he had done in 1782, when chairman of *the secret committee*; or at once to erase from their journals *the resolution* then moved and carried by him, which Fox declared to be the only mode of avoiding the recorded stigma of shameful inconsistency; "I admit," replied Dundas, "that these animadversions seem to be warranted by my conduct in 1782. But, though I then moved for Mr. Hastings's recall, I did it solely on grounds of expediency, and not with the slightest intention of instituting against him a criminal proceeding."—"I will nevertheless acknowledge," added he, "that I neither concur with my two friends, members of the board of control, in the justice or in the policy of the Rohilla war. It must, however, be recollected that since that period Mr. Hastings has been appointed, by act of parliament, governor-general of Bengal. I consider his appointment as a tacit, if not an avowed pardon. He has subsequently rendered the most splendid services to his country. An impeachment therefore, at this distance of time, would produce consequences far more

injurious to our national interests in the East; than any advantage could compensate, to be derived from making him an example of parliamentary punishment." It seems impossible to dispute the truth, or to deny the solidity, of Dundas's reasoning, as applied to the Rohilla war. To have punished Hastings for that measure, after it had been virtually approved, or at least obliterated, by his nomination to the office of governor-general; would have been to imitate the most odious act of the base and odious reign of the first of the Stuarts:—I mean, the attainder and condemnation of Sir Walter Raleigh.

If the allusions made to Lord Clive by Hardinge, on a former debate, were severe, Lord North's present line of action gave rise to observations not less pointed; Hastings having been three times named by parliament, governor-general of Bengal, after the termination of the Rohilla war, between 1774 and 1781, while that nobleman continued at the head of his majesty's councils. How, therefore, could he now join in impeaching a man whose measures he must have ministerially approved? Yet, as Lord North attended in his place, and took his seat near Burke, it was evident that he intended to support the charge. Such a conduct seemed much more liable to the imputation of inconsistency, than the contradiction of which Dundas was accused by Fox. Lord North became in fact the mark at which the

principal blows were aimed, not only from the treasury bench, but from other quarters. "What opinion," exclaimed Powis, "must this assembly form of a minister, who could not have been ignorant that Mr. Hastings was accused by the members of the supreme council, his colleagues, with the whole culpability of the Rohilla war, and yet continued to maintain him in his high employment?" The Earl of Mornington, then member for an obscure borough on the confines of Cornwall, belonging to the Percy family; and who did not foresee that before the century closed, he should be, himself, one of Hastings's successors in the supreme government of India; first presented himself, I believe, on that day, to the notice of the house. He, as well as the master of the rolls, attacked Lord North with great asperity. Even Hardinge admitted that, "though every other individual present should join against Hastings, the noble lord in the blue riband must vote for his acquittal on the actual charge." Under this accumulated load of censure, Lord North rose repeatedly, in exculpation or explanation of his conduct, which he justified on plausible, if not on solid grounds. He protested that he had ever condemned the Rohilla war, and had made every effort, as soon as the intelligence reached him, to procure, by means of the court of directors, the recall of Hastings:—efforts, which, he said, were rendered abortive by the court of East India Pro-

prietors, who continued the governor-general in his high situation. Satisfactory as these reasons might however be esteemed, Lord North did not trust to their solidity. He withdrew before the question was put from the chair; probably considering it to be more decorous, though he might lend his sanction to the prosecution of Hastings, not to vote against him in person.

The division, clamorously demanded from every part of the house, at length took place; when only sixty-seven persons were found to support Burke's *motion*, declaring that "there was ground for charging Warren Hastings with high crimes and misdemeanors on the matter of the Rohilla war." One hundred and nineteen votes negatived the proposition. I formed one of that majority. The aggregate number did not exceed a third part of the whole house of commons, as then constituted. It was therefore evident that near 370 members, out of 558, declined to vote on the question. Great exultation was expressed by Hastings's friends, at the result of this first charge; and various members of the opposite party avowed, that if the event of the next article, which respected the treatment of *Cheyt Sing*, should prove similar to the present, Burke still intended to bring forward one other charge; namely, the *Begums or Princesses of Oude*. But they added, that if it should be likewise negatived, he was determined to throw up the prosecution; leaving

on parliament the responsibility, or, as he denominated it, the disgrace, of quashing the impeachment. Sanguine expectations were entertained by many of the late governor-general's supporters, that the whole business would speedily terminate triumphantly for him. And it being well known that his majesty considered him as one of the most able and meritorious subjects in his dominions, Hastings's elevation to the British peerage was anticipated with a sort of certainty, whenever his acquittal should be pronounced by the house of commons. It was even predicted, as an imminent event, within the walls of that assembly. Roger Wilbraham, who had been recently chosen member for Helston, when he seconded Burke's motion relative to the Rohilla war, having contumeliously descanted on Hastings's recognized talents of conciliation, instanced three individuals; namely, Sir Elijah Impey, Major Scott, and Mr. Dundas; all whom he had found means to convert from enemies into friends. Wilbraham subjoined, "The honourable governor will, I make no question, give ample proof of his conciliatory talents in the house of peers." Such, indeed, was the opinion generally received throughout the metropolis and the country, during the first days of June.

We must, nevertheless, allow that this supposition reposed on very doubtful or precarious foundations. Pitt, it was true, had *voted* for Mr.

Hastings's acquittal on the late charge; but he had not *spoken* in defence of the Rohilla war. Maintaining throughout both debates a pertinacious silence, he contented himself "*pedibus ire in sententiam*," like an obscure member of parliament. This line of conduct sufficiently indicated how far he was from thoroughly approving Hastings's attack of Rohilcund. Nor did Dundas hold out more reason to expect any systematic support from *him*, in the progress of the prosecution. He had indeed *spoken*, as well as *divided* against Burke; but, though he thought that the governor-general ought not to be impeached for a measure undertaken so many years antecedent to the accusation, yet he maintained his original condemnation of the act itself. Mr. William Grenville defended both the war, and its author. His character, talents, and close connexions of consanguinity with the chancellor of the exchequer, all, lent weight to his opinions. He had, however, undergone a very severe personal reprehension from Fox, for "the dangerous and relaxed maxims of corrupt morality, which he used as arguments in defence of Hastings." "I am concerned to hear such doctrines," exclaimed Fox, "fall from such a person:—doctrines most inauspicious to the country, if, as his rank and abilities highly entitle him to expect, he should at some future time become, himself, first minister."

This hypothetical prediction was accomplished

twenty years afterwards, in 1806, when, on Pitt's decease, Mr. Grenville, already created a peer, was placed at the head of the treasury; Fox accepting the office of secretary for foreign affairs, in the same administration. Jenkinson, likewise defended the Rohilla war, and warmly supported Hastings. Some years earlier, his personal interposition would have materially affected the division. But those times no longer existed, when in every part of the house were found *the king's friends*. The very race had almost become extinct, and another class of men, *the minister's friends*, supplied their place. Pitt, master of a decided majority in parliament, idolized without doors, not embarrassed with an unpopular war, like Lord North; and having only to contend against a party which had lost the affection of the country; lay under no necessity of consulting the royal wishes, or of sacrificing to them his own principles, inclinations, or convictions. He might dictate his pleasure at St. James's. For, to whom could the king, if displeased, have recourse? The Marquis of Lansdown would not have ventured to accept the reins of government, nor did he possess the means of retaining them during a single month, in opposition to Pitt. Never was any minister more powerful, nor more independent of the crown, than Pitt in the year 1786!

13th June.—No sooner had the house of commons met, subsequent to the Whitsuntide recess,

than Fox brought forward the second article of impeachment; namely, Hastings's treatment of Cheyt Sing, Zemindar or Prince of the province of Benares. The attendance fell little short of the numbers present at the agitation of the Rohilla war; great and general anxiety pervading the assembly, occasioned by their ignorance of the part which Pitt meditated to take in the discussion. I am indeed of opinion that, with the single exception of Dundas, not an individual on the treasury bench knew, at the moment when the debate began, what sentiments the chancellor of the exchequer would deliver on the occasion. Fox, with his usual ability, stated the charge; consisting principally in the severe, arbitrary, and exorbitant pecuniary fine extorted by Hastings from the rajah. This fact he detailed with great animation, pointing the indignation of his audience against so tyrannical a measure; and demanding whether they chose to become the avengers of the oppressed, or the accomplices of the tyrant? For the recent vote respecting the Rohilla war, he admitted there might be some pretext, drawn from the length of time which had elapsed since its commission. None could be pleaded on the present occasion. The facts were undeniable and atrocious. From the decision of that evening, France and Europe would learn what system of government was henceforward to be adopted in the East; and whether,



upon full proof of guilt, a British house of commons possessed sufficient virtue to punish the author of such enormities.

Pitt rose very soon after Fox concluded ; and, though I deeply lamented the line of action embraced by the first minister on that evening, yet scarcely ever did I find greater reason to admire the range of his faculties, the lucid order of his ideas, or the facility, plenitude, and grace of his elocution. After lamenting that his duty imperiously prevented him from obeying the impulse of his inclination, by absenting himself altogether from the present proceedings ;—"for," continued he, "I feel the utmost difficulty, as well as repugnance, to decide on judicial questions connected with Asiatic principles and habits, under the impression of feelings and opinions imbibed, as well as matured, under the British constitution ;"—yet, he said, he had endeavoured to make himself master of the case. In the progress of his speech, he laid open the whole system of feudal tenures, together with the nature of military and civil subordination, as recognized throughout Hindostan ; the obligations imposed by it, and the extent of power vested in the supreme ruler or sovereign. Reasoning from these assumptions, all which he brought to the touch-stone of history, he satisfactorily demonstrated that Hastings possessed the right to call on Cheyt Sing for aid, both pecuniary, and in men. It was an equally

incontestable fact, that the governor-general became justified in imposing a fine upon any refractory or disloyal feudatory. Pitt shewed that the contumacy, followed by the rebellion of the rajah, clearly subjected him to deposition. As he proceeded, he neither spared the severest reflections on the individuals engaged in the prosecution; nor did he fail in paying the highest encomiums to the firmness, decision, and vast resources of mind displayed by Hastings, under circumstances the most critical. The comments which he made on Fox, as well as on Burke, for the arts of misrepresentation to which they condescended, in order to prejudice the object of their attack, were strongly pointed. But on Francis, who had seconded the motion, he launched his bitterest animadversions; not hesitating to stigmatize certain parts of his conduct, while acting as a member of the supreme council, with the epithet of malignant, and of a nature impugning the rectitude of his character.

After bearing such distinguished testimony to Hastings's public merits, and reprobating the line of action embraced by his accusers; after proving the right inherent in the Bengal government to fine a contumacious Zemindar, and shewing that he had merited punishment; it seemed necessarily to follow that the late governor-general must be pronounced innocent. But the chancellor of the exchequer, disappointing, I believe,

equally the expectations of his friends and of his opponents, declared that, however commendable Hastings's motives might be, yet "the fine imposed on Cheyt Sing was exorbitant, unjust, and tyrannical." "I therefore," continued he, "shall agree to the motion before the house. But I confine myself solely to the *exorbitancy* of the fine, approving every preceding as well as subsequent part of Mr. Hastings's conduct, throughout the whole transaction." The astonishment produced by so unexpected a declaration, it would be difficult adequately to describe. Various persons rose to express their concern at Pitt's condemnation of the governor-general. Only one individual spoke in its commendation. Lord Mulgrave, and Mr. William Grenville, who were both seated near the minister on the treasury bench, successively protested, that whatever concern it occasioned them to differ with him, yet, as honest men, they could not think Hastings deserving of impeachment, nor could concur in *the resolution*. Even the attorney-general, (Arden,) with more independence of mind than I believed him to possess; and though indebted to Pitt's friendship, far more than to his own legal ability, for every step which he had made towards the great dignities of the law; quitted him on this occasion. He justified his intended vote in a few manly words. Major Scott deplored the ministerial declaration, as forming a hard return for the meritorious exertions of a great func-

tionary placed in a post of extreme danger ; whose transcendent services, while Pitt acknowledged, he now abandoned to his enemies, on account of the *quantum* of a fine levied, not from any corrupt motive, but for the public service, in a moment of distress. Dempster himself, one of the most conscientious men who ever sate in parliament, elevated above all party views, and proverbial for candour, expressed similar convictions. “ Mr. Hastings,” observed he, “ has been the saviour of our possessions in the East ; and if he merits impeachment for any act of his whole life, it is for having been so weak a man as to return to this country with a very limited fortune.”

I said that only one member of the assembly rose to applaud Pitt’s speech, and the sentiments which it expressed ; but that member was Powis. After lavishing many encomiums on the spirit which characterized it, he added, sarcastically, his lamentations at perceiving that the chancellor of the exchequer was deserted by his friends. “ Two of the ministers for India,” continued Powis, “ have not only held doctrines altogether repugnant to those professed by the head of the administration, but have virtually maintained that political expediency sanctions injustice :—a principle to which I never can assent.” Irritated at these animadversions, Lord Mulgrave exclaimed, that “ the minister seated near him would be wholly unfit to conduct the affairs of this country for a single day,

if, when a question such as the present was agitated, where the house acted as accusers, and in some measure as judges, he could expect his friends to sacrifice their opinions." Nor did Mr. Grenville acquiesce in Powis's reflections without severely retorting on him; denying at the same time, as Lord Mulgrave had previously done, his having ever asserted that injustice could derive a sanction from political expediency. Pitt now interposed. "I lament," said he, "that any difference of opinion should have arisen between my friends and me: but it is an honourable difference; not upon a principle; only on the application of a principle. *I* think the fine of five hundred thousand pounds imposed by the governor-general on Cheyt Sing most exorbitant. My honourable and noble friends think otherwise." Here the debate closed, though at an early hour; the part taken by the minister leaving no hope from protracting the discussion, nor any doubt whatever as to the final issue on the division. In fact, the question being called for, seventy-nine members, of whom I was one, acquitted Hastings; while precisely the same numerical majority which supported him on the first charge, declared him culpable on the second; namely, one hundred and nineteen. The aggregate numbers on both occasions differed only twelve, all of whom were taken from the ministerial ranks, and thrown into the opposite scale. On the other hand, as Burke's friends did not exceed sixty-seven on

the division relative to the Rohilla war, we must admit that full fifty individuals followed Pitt without hesitation. Dundas never opened his lips during the whole evening; but he took care to vote with his principal.

That fifty, or even a hundred persons, should have supported the chancellor of the exchequer on a measure of state, without nicely weighing its merits, can excite no surprize. Every first minister of England must be able to rely on such a phalanx, who ask no questions. Such is necessarily the genius of our government and constitution, in practice, though not in theory. But, in a case where ministerial feelings or interests could have no place, and on which the house assumed a juridical character, more severe scruples might have directed their votes. These reflections derive strength, if we consider that the far greater number of those who divided with Pitt were men of high birth and independent fortunes, though not, it may be thought, of independent minds:—for it will scarcely be maintained, that they could conscientiously acquit Hastings on the Rohilla question, and yet impeach him on the charge relative to Cheyt Sing. The fact very forcibly proves how great an influence Pitt exercised over his parliamentary adherents. No minister in our time has equalled him in his empire over the individuals who followed his fortune. I do not except from the force of the remark even the

Marquis of Londonderry himself. In the course of a short conversation which succeeded the division, carried on across the table, Burke observed, with more than his usual complacency, that the chancellor of the exchequer had accused his want of diligence in carrying on the prosecution, and found fault with his charges. "But," concluded Burke, "as he has given me his vote this evening, I am satisfied to take one along with the other." Instead of a peerage, a place in the privy council, and a seat at the East India Board, Hastings beheld now before him the probable prospect of an impeachment, with its train of vexations, delays, and expenses. Inconsistency, heightened by political ingratitude, were imputed to Pitt. Enmity and rivalry were attributed to Dundas, who, as the public believed, dreaded Hastings's presence and ability at the board of control.

14th—16th June.—An incident of a singular nature took place at this time, and which, as connected with the late governor-general, occasioned very malignant comments. The Soubah of the Deckan, Nizam Ally Cawn, one of the most powerful princes of Hindostan, impelled, as he asserted, by a spontaneous sentiment of regard or veneration for the King of Great Britain, transmitted to Calcutta a diamond of great size and value, which he wished the governor-general to present to his majesty. But Hastings having quitted the Ganges previous to its arrival in Ben-

gal, the packet containing the bulse was forwarded to him ; and, in consequence of various accidents, did not reach him before the 2nd day of June, the evening on which he was acquitted upon the charge of the Rohilla war. A chain of circumstances wholly casual delayed its presentation to the sovereign till the 14th of the same month, the day subsequent to the decision on the business of Cheyt Sing ; when Lord Sydney, as president of the East India Board, delivered the packet, together with a letter from the Nizam, to the King. Hastings himself witnessed its presentation at the levee, having sent the diamond, through the intervention of Major Scott, to Lord Sydney. Two days afterwards, it being agitated in the house of commons to postpone the further consideration of the charges against Hastings till the ensuing session, Major Scott strongly objected to a single hour's delay. He even protested that the fate of India, and of the British empire in the East, might depend, as he believed, on terminating the present prosecution before the prorogation of parliament should take place. To these denunciations he added some dark and undefined expressions of alarm at the intelligence recently received from Calcutta ; which he represented to be of a description involving the interests, if not the future existence, of the East India Company.

*16th—26th June.*—Whatever apprehension such language might be calculated to excite, no attempt



was made at the time to enquire into its nature ; but, the subject being renewed on the 21st of June, Sheridan alluding to it, observed, that if Major Scott really knew of any disastrous information from India, he ought to state it to the house. " For my own part," continued he, " I have made every enquiry in my power, with a view to learn whether any extraordinary news has been recently brought over from the East. But I can learn nothing extraordinary, except the receipt of an extraordinary large diamond, asserted to have been sent to Mr. Hastings, and presented to his majesty at an extraordinary and critical period of time. It is likewise extraordinary, that the individual selected for the purpose of presenting this diamond should be Mr. Hastings." Scott, taken by surprize, made no immediate reply. As soon, however, as he had collected the proper documents for repelling an insinuation so personal to Hastings, and which seemed even to go still higher, he took occasion to allude to it, while addressing the house on the debts and revenues of India. " An honourable gentleman," said the major, " has mentioned the presentation to his majesty of an extraordinary diamond, at an extraordinary period of time. I dare say he did it without serious intention : but as every circumstance attending the transaction has been infamously misrepresented, I trust I shall be permitted to rescue my own character, no less than that

of Mr. Hastings, from such calumnious reflections." He then minutely detailed every fact relative to the diamond, producing letters or papers in proof of each separate assertion. Having finished his narration, he subjoined, "I do not comprehend what inferences can be drawn from the whole business, derogatory either to Mr. Hastings's honour, or to that of any other person. I delivered the letter and the bulse publicly to one of his majesty's secretaries of state. Whether the bulse did or did not contain a valuable diamond, I most solemnly declare I am ignorant. Nor can any man suppose that, however valuable such a present might intrinsically be, it could form an object of the least consequence to the great personage in question." The debate continued for a considerable time subsequent to this explanation; but neither Fox nor Sheridan, though each rose to address the house, adverted to it in their speeches. Newspapers and print-shops formed the channels through which the enemies of Hastings generally transmitted their accusations or insinuations over the kingdom.

With the decision on the charge relative to Cheyt Sing, terminated the proceedings carried on against Hastings during the session. Burke professed, indeed, his readiness to proceed, though he stated his apprehensions that, at so advanced a period of the year, it would be found impracticable to procure an adequate attendance. If, how-

ever, the house should be of an opposite opinion, he said, he was prepared, with the least practicable delay, to bring forward the next article, which regarded the Princesses of Oude. Fox expressing himself a warm advocate for dispatch, and Pitt not opposing it; while Major Scott represented the injustice and cruelty of procrastinating the prosecution; Mr. Hamilton (subsequently more known as Marquis of Abercorn) gave notice that he would move for a call of the house. He did so, a few days afterwards, declaring that he was solely impelled by his feelings for an *accused* and *persecuted* individual, to invoke their justice on the present occasion. He testified some surprize at not finding Fox in his place, from whom he had expected personal support; deplored the hard fate of a man who, after having devoted his life to one of the greatest offices which could be held by a subject, which he had executed so meritoriously, found only accusation on returning home; and concluded by making the *motion* for a call. Sheridan immediately rising, denied that his absent friend had ever professed a wish for continuing the prosecution during the present session, unless an attendance could be procured becoming its gravity and importance. In language equally forcible as persuasive, he pointed out the imputations to which the house would be subjected, if, when hardly more than one hundred and twenty members could probably be brought to

divide on any of the remaining articles, they should still persist. These reasons perfectly convinced the great majority of the house, though they failed in producing the same effect on Mr. Hamilton.

Sheridan having fully argued the question of the call, then addressed himself personally to that gentleman. "He has denominated Mr. Hastings," said Sheridan, "an *accused* and *persecuted* man. Is such language either decent in itself, or to be endured within these walls? That Mr. Hastings is an *accused* man, I admit: but how is he a *persecuted* man? I will not, however, endeavour to prove that he is *not persecuted*; because if allusion is intended to the recent vote on the charge relating to Cheyt Sing, the honourable member sits on the same bench with several of Mr. Hastings's *persecutors*, who know much better how to justify their conduct than it would become me to attempt to do it for them." Hamilton, ardently attached as he was to the chancellor of the exchequer, yet possessed great independence of mind, joined with a haughty inflexibility of character. Deeply impressed with a sense of Hastings's services to the state, he disdained to follow the crowd of ministerial dependants who alternately acquitted or condemned him, as their leader dictated. Even the speech pronounced by Pitt on the same evening, which admitted the impossibility of enforcing the proposed call, and concurred

with Sheridan in advising to postpone all further proceedings, made no impression on Hamilton. Rising at the close of the debate, and addressing himself first to Sheridan, "It has been proposed to me," said he, "to explain away the word *persecuted*. I do not mean to assert that *the house of commons persecutes* Mr. Hastings. This house, I well know, *persecutes* no individual. But the acrimonious language used respecting him within these walls, I denominate *persecution*." Then turning towards Pitt, who was seated at a very inconsiderable distance from him, he added, "I entertain little doubt that I shall find myself this evening in a minority. Nevertheless, I will divide the house on my *motion*." Only thirty persons were found to sustain it, while ninety-nine voted for suspending the prosecution. Thus terminated the proceedings against Hastings during the session of 1786; and with them may be said to have terminated the session itself, though his majesty did not immediately prorogue the parliament.

*July.*—If we would name two individuals who, more than any others of their countrymen, (unless we except Lord Heathfield,) contributed to shed a portion of glory over the calamitous period of George the Third's reign which intervened from 1775 to 1783, during the prosecution of the American war, we should select Hastings and Rodney. The one preserved our empire in the East, while the other triumphantly rescued Jamaica

from the attack of the combined fleets of France and Spain. We may, however, almost defy antiquity to produce more signal instances of national ingratitude or neglect than were exhibited in their persons. Hastings, recalled by the court of directors as early as the year 1782, in consequence of a vote of the house of commons, was only continued in his high employment by the efforts of the court of proprietors. Rodney was superseded, nearly at the same time, in the moment of victory, by a secretary of state, who did not hesitate to send out as his successor an admiral unknown by distinguished service; and to whom the secretary was indebted for money lost at the gaming-table, as common fame reported, without receiving any contradiction. The former, instead of a peerage, met an impeachment, and was not even placed in the privy council till he had passed his eightieth year. A peerage of the lowest gradation was rather extorted from, than conferred by, the Rockingham administration, on the latter. Neither the one nor the other attained to affluence. The governor-general's best, if not only support, was derived from the annuity granted him by the East India proprietors. The admiral subsisted principally, if not entirely, on his pension, and his naval pay; both which constituted an inadequate provision for a man encumbered with a numerous family. To *him*, the capture of St. Eustatius proved only a fruitful source of litigation, vexa-

tion, and loss. At this very time, one of the many prize causes which by appeal were carried before the privy council, on the part of the owners of property seized at St. Eustatius, was determined against him, to the amount of at least fifteen thousand pounds, including damages and costs. In 1786, Lord Rodney, then verging towards seventy, resided in a hired house at Knightsbridge, where I have participated his dinner, which was very far from splendid. He survived till May 1792. His dissolution was sudden, he having retired to rest in his usual health, at his house in Hanover-square, without any symptom that indicated approaching death; but, about two or three in the morning, he rang his bell. A black servant, who had attended on him many years with equal affection and fidelity, instantly repaired to his bedside; and finding him almost senseless, ran to procure medical assistance. Before however any aid arrived, he had expired.

Jenkinson was more fortunate, or rather, he was wiser, than either Hastings or Rodney. Scarcely had parliament been prorogued, when he attained the great object of his ambition, the British peerage, without passing, as was then common, through the intermediate stage of an Irish title. A few weeks afterwards, he was made chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster. At the same time, a new board of trade being constituted, Pitt placed Lord Hawkesbury at its head, as pre-

sident. So many marks of royal and ministerial favour had been earned by five-and-twenty years of public service, aided by eminent and solid, though not brilliant talents; by unremitting labour, patience, and a variety of attainments, all principally directed to one point. Scarcely any subject, during the course of George the Third's long reign, has supported a heavier load of unpopularity than Jenkinson. Lord North, it is true, when called on repeatedly in the house of commons, declared that all the assertions of secret influence were unfounded; or at least, that he never had discovered any such concealed agency lurking behind the throne. Some of the last words which Jenkinson himself ever uttered in the same assembly, constituted a peremptory denial of the imputation. I was present on the occasion. It took place during the course of the second debate on the Rohilla war, early in June 1786, only a short time before he went up to the house of peers. In the progress of the investigation, Jenkinson, who had spoken in defence of Hastings, was attacked both by Fox and Sheridan. They, availing themselves of the term *influence*, which he had inadvertently used, accused him of having been, in his own person, the depositary of an unconstitutional power of that nature. He instantly rose, and, in animated but temperate language, repelled the accusation. "I treat it," said he, "as I have uniformly considered



all the vulgar allusions of the same description levelled at me, with indifference and contempt. And I defy any man living to prove that either within, or without these walls, I have ever exerted undue or improper influence." No reply was made to this pointed declaration ; but conviction did not follow it, the charge not admitting of proof, and resting on general belief. That during many years he enjoyed more of the royal confidence than any other subject, it seems difficult to doubt. Nor did he disclaim it ; only protesting that he never had exercised any *undue* or *improper* influence over his sovereign's mind.

On his elevation to the peerage, he assumed for his motto,

"Palma, non sine pulvere ;"

which words his enemies translated,

"This is the reward of my dirty work."

Dean Swift had in a similar manner rendered Queen Anne's device of "*Semper eadem*," by the words, "Worse and worse." The authors of the "*Rolliad*," who had satirized Jenkinson while a commoner, did not leave him in repose after he had reached the house of lords. They published "a congratulatory ode" on his creation, parodied from Horace's

"*Quem virum, aut heros ;*"

in which poem, describing his admission among the peers, it is asserted that he will "slavish doctrines spread :"

“As some ill-omen’d baleful yew,  
That sheds around a poisonous dew,  
And *shakes its rueful head.*”

Nor did they omit to mention the “mysterious diamonds,” presented with a view “to check the impending vote.” Lord Hawkesbury, though during his whole life he never sate in cabinet, yet enjoyed as much consideration as any member of the administration, if we except Pitt. Unquestionably the king not only approved, but contributed to his being created a *baron*. Whether his majesty wished him to be raised to the dignity of an *earl*, an event which took place about ten years later, is not equally clear.

During the four or five concluding years of his life, he retired from the world, and from public affairs in a great measure, enjoying the uncommon felicity to behold his eldest son placed in the high office of secretary of state, as well as lord warden of the Cinque Ports; and advancing with slow, but steady pace, to the head of the treasury. Neither the first Lord Holland, nor the great Earl of Chatham, witnessed the political elevation of their sons. Lord Guilford, indeed, saw his son occupy the highest employments during a space of twelve years; but he survived to be a spectator of Lord North’s fall, and might have exclaimed with the King of Pylos, while contemplating the funeral pyre of Antilochus—

“——*cur hæc in tempora duret,  
Quid facinus dignum tam longo admiserit ævo!*”

On the contrary, Jenkinson's close of life received almost every alleviation which nature or fortune can bestow on that period of our existence. His acquisitions, already ample, were considerably augmented, about three years after he attained to the peerage, by the decease of Sir Banks Jenkinson, to whose title, as well as estate, he succeeded. Even his faculties remained unimpaired when he had passed his eightieth year; but a debility in his limbs, particularly in the knees, rendered him, during a considerable time previous to his death, incapable of moving or rising without assistance. If we reflect that he was near four-and-thirty when he commenced his career, as private secretary to the Earl of Bute; that he attained to an unrivalled height of confidence with George the Third; finally, that he was created a baron before he reached his sixtieth, and an earl before he reached his seventieth year;—we shall readily admit that he must have possessed great, as well as rare, endowments of mind.

While the king, liberated from a calamitous war, and elevated to a pinnacle of popularity which he had never reached during the first twenty-two years of his reign, became annually more an object of general attachment; the Prince of Wales had plunged himself into irretrievable domestic embarrassments. His income, though not adequate to exhibitions of splendour, yet, when encreased by the revenues of the duchy of

Cornwall, might well have enabled him, with economy, to support the dignity of his high station. But profusion characterized every department of Carlton-house, and a debt had already accrued, exceeding two hundred thousand pounds. His majesty, to whom the prince made application for assistance, having returned an immediate and positive refusal, his royal highness embraced the resolution of dissolving his household. This determination he executed without delay; thus converting to his own personal wants or gratifications, the allowance given him by parliament for maintaining the state of a Prince of Wales. The nation would, however, have highly approved his renunciation of all the paraphernalia of grandeur, if in consequence any progress had been made in extinguishing his debts. But they continued, on the contrary, during many years to augment, and at length reached a point at which the legislature was compelled to interfere, by nominating commissioners to superintend their liquidation. To so humiliating a situation had personal indulgences reduced the heir-apparent, at twenty-four years of age! The king, who well knew his character, fascinating under many points of view, and therefore calculated to attach, took effectual care to remove from any contact with him all his brothers. Frederic, Duke of York, resided altogether at Hanover. William Henry, brought up to the naval service, commanded the "Pegase,"

a ship of seventy-four guns ; and had recently left Plymouth for his destination, Newfoundland : while Edward, the fourth son, was sent over to Geneva, under the care of a governor. His majesty now entered his three youngest sons, Ernest, Augustus, and Adolphus, as students at the Hanoverian university of Gottingen, to which seminary they repaired. Only the eldest of the seven sons remained at home in a dismantled palace, all the state apartments of which were shut up, his establishment dismissed, and himself reduced, in external appearance, to the condition of a private gentleman.

*2nd August.* — A most atrocious, though, happily, impotent attempt, which was made at this time on the king's person, might nevertheless, if it had been directed by a sound intelligence, have transferred the crown to the Prince of Wales. As his majesty alighted at the garden-door leading into St. James's Palace, where he arrived in his carriage from Windsor, a female, who had placed herself there, presented him a petition. Nearly in the same instant, while he was about to receive it, she pushed at him a dessert-knife which lay concealed under the paper. Fortunately, the blade being weak in the middle, where it had been ground away, doubled or bent, from the resistance made by the king's waistcoat, without inflicting the slightest wound ; and before she could repeat the stroke, one of the yeomen of the guard

forced the weapon out of her hand. The king displayed the greatest self-collection, observing to the persons present that he had received no injury, and ordered them not to do her the slightest bodily harm. He then dressed himself for his levee, which he held, precisely as he would have done on any other occasion. The woman, whose name was Margaret Nicholson, being pronounced insane, was transferred to a cell at Bedlam. Her alienation of mind received, indeed, sufficient confirmation from an inspection of the instrument which she had chosen for perpetrating the deed. Every circumstance attending it afforded matter of derision to the opposition. Addresses of congratulation being presented to the sovereign on the event from almost all parts of the kingdom, the individuals who received the honour of knighthood were contumeliously denominated "Knights of St. Margaret." Even the danger itself was treated as imaginary, and his escape as undeserving of national gratitude. In an "eclogue" published immediately afterwards, entitled "Margaret Nicholson," (parodied from the "Daphnis" of Virgil,) where Wilkes and Jenkinson maintain the dialogue; after representing the whole transaction under colours calculated to render it ridiculous, Jenkinson exclaims,

"Ah! whither had we fled, had that foul day  
Torn him untimely from our arms away!  
What ills had mark'd the age, had that dire thrust  
Pierc'd his soft heart, and bow'd his *bob* to dust!"

When we consider how personally insulting were these compositions, where wit and poetry combined to hold up the king to the contempt of his subjects, we cannot wonder that he shut the door of his cabinet against their authors and abettors. Every couplet tended to confirm the administration in power. The errors of Fox and his followers, even more than Pitt's resplendent talents, conduced to prolong his administration.

On the day when Margaret Nicholson made the attempt to assassinate his majesty, the Chevalier del Campo, minister plenipotentiary from the court of Spain, arriving at St. James's with the intention of attending the levee, learned the intelligence on his entering the palace. Finding however that the king had not postponed the levee on that account, he went up, stood in the circle, and received those marks of familiar condescension with which George the Third always treated the foreign envoys. On quitting the royal presence, he instantly ordered four post-horses to be put to his carriage; drove down to Windsor; and walking up to *the Lodge*, seated himself in the hall. Conscious that information of the attempt would speedily arrive, either by common report or by a special messenger, and aware that fame might exaggerate the fact, he determined to be in person the bearer of the intelligence to the queen. After waiting patiently near two hours, a royal footman arrived,

bringing the particulars of the transaction. Del Campo then announced himself, sent in his name to her majesty, and requested permission to present himself before her. He was immediately admitted, and informed her of the whole matter; adding, that he had attended the levee, conversed for some minutes with the king, and had left him in the best health and spirits. A finer *trait de courtesan* is not to be found in *Dangeau*, or in *St. Simon*. The Duke d'Antin could scarcely exceed it, when paying his court to Louis the Fourteenth. Nor was it lost on the King and Queen of Great Britain. The Chevalier del Campo, created a marquis, received in the following year the appointment of ambassador from his Catholic Majesty to the court of London, in which capacity he remained here till 1795. I knew him well. He was said to be of English extraction, and of a very obscure origin; but Gondomar, who obtained so powerful an ascendant over the timid and pusillanimous councils of this country under the first of the Stuarts, might have owned that del Campo was not unworthy to occupy the post which he himself had filled. Del Campo, though of a very diminutive figure, possessed pleasing manners, spoke English almost like a native, entertained with great elegance, and always laboured to maintain the most amicable relations between the two courts of London and Madrid.



*8th August.*—Among the distinguished individuals who at this time were created British peers, the Duke of Queensberry received the title of Baron Douglas. He is better known as Earl of March, having passed his fiftieth year before he succeeded to the dukedom of Queensberry. Few noblemen have occupied a more conspicuous place about the court, and the town, during at least half a century, under the reigns of George the Second and Third. Like Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, he pursued pleasure under every shape; and with as much ardour at fourscore, as he had done at twenty. After exhausting all the gratifications of human life, towards its close he sate down at his residence, near Hyde Park Corner, where he remained a spectator of that moving scene, which Johnson denominated “the full tide of human existence,” but in which he could no longer take a very active part. I lived in almost daily habits of intercourse with him, when I was in London, during the last seven years of his protracted career. His person had then become a ruin; but not so his mind. Seeing only with one eye, hearing very imperfectly only with one ear, nearly toothless, and labouring under multiplied infirmities, he possessed all his intellectual faculties, including his memory. Never did any man retain more animation, or manifest a sounder judgment. Even his figure, though emaciated, still remained elegant: his manners were noble

and polished ; his conversation gay, always entertaining, generally original, rarely instructive, frequently libertine ; indicating a strong, sagacious, masculine intellect, with a thorough knowledge of man. If I were compelled to name the particular individual who had received from nature the keenest common sense of any person I ever knew, I should select the Duke of Queensberry. Unfortunately, his sources of information, the turf, the drawing-room, the theatre, the great world, were not the most pure, nor the best adapted to impress him with favourable ideas of his own species. Information as acquired from books, he always treated with contempt ; and used to ask me, what advantage, or solid benefit, I had ever derived from the knowledge that he supposed me to possess of history ; — a question which it was not easy for me satisfactorily to answer, either to him, or to myself. Known to be immensely rich, destitute of issue, and unmarried, he formed a mark at which every necessitous man or woman throughout the metropolis directed their aim. It is a fact, that when he lay dying in December 1810, his bed was covered with billets and letters to the number of at least seventy ; mostly, indeed, addressed to him by females of every description, and of every rank, from duchesses, down to ladies of the easiest virtue. Unable from his extenuated state to open, or to peruse them, he

ordered them, as they arrived, to be laid on his bed, where they remained, the seals unbroken, till he expired.

Throughout his whole life he had been a votary, but not a dupe to women. Nor was he incapable of forming an honourable attachment, however licentious might have been his practice. He nourished an ardent, and a permanent passion, during several years, for a lady of distinction whom I well knew, daughter of a first minister of Great Britain, Mr. Pelham. But her father considering him as a nobleman of dissipated habits, character, and fortune, interdicted their union. It must be owned that the duke was fortunate in this prohibition;—for she became the most infatuated gamester in the three kingdoms, unless Lady Elizabeth Luttrell formed an exception. When seated at faro, she sometimes exhibited all the variations of distress, or rather of anguish, in her countenance. Mr. Pelham having no son, bequeathed to her, and her younger sister, that charming retreat in Surrey, which Thomson justly celebrates when, tracing the vale of Thames, he mentions—

*“Esher’s groves,*

*Where in the sweetest solitude, embrac’d*

*By the soft windings of the silent Mole,*

*From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.”*

Miss Pelham, who found neither felicity nor repose among those shades, and whose whole facul-

ties were concentrated in the occupation of play, dissipated her fortune; and notwithstanding her great connexions of every kind, reduced herself in age to become absolutely dependant for support on her sister's affection.

To return to the Duke of Queensberry. If he had lived under Charles the Second, he might have disputed for pre-eminence in the favour of that prince, with the Arlingtons, the Buckinghams, the Falmouths, and the Dorsets, so celebrated under his reign. Many fabulous stories were circulated and believed respecting him; as, among others, that he wore a glass eye, that he used milk baths, and other idle tales. It is however a fact, that the duke performed, in his own drawing-room, the scene of Paris and the Goddesses. Three of the most beautiful females to be found in London presented themselves before him, precisely as the divinities of Homer are supposed to have appeared to Paris on Mount Ida: while *he*, habited like "the Dardan shepherd," holding a gilded apple in his hand, conferred the prize on her whom he deemed the fairest. This classic exhibition took place at his house opposite the Green Park. Neither the second Duke of Buckingham, commemorated by Pope, whose whole life was a voluptuous whim, nor any other of the licentious noblemen his contemporaries, appear to have ever realized a scene so analogous to

the manners of that profligate period. The correct days of George the Third were reserved to witness its accomplishment.

The Duke of Queensberry, during the last years of his life, having reluctantly withdrawn from Newmarket, from the Clubs, and from St. James's, passed his time with a few select friends, of which number I was frequently one; sometimes, though rarely, venturing into public. His passion for music, when added to his wish of being still seen upon the great arena of the world, carried him occasionally, notwithstanding his deafness, to the Opera-house; where he completely personified Juvenal's

“Quid refert, magni sedeat qua parte theatri,  
Qui vix cornicines exaudiet, atque tubarum  
Concentus?”

The duke had his *French* medical attendant always near him, as the successor of Augustus retained his *Greek* physician. The *Père Elisée* answered precisely to Tacitus's description of Charicles. “Erat medicus arte insignis,” says the Roman historian, “nomine *Charicles*, non quidem regere valetudines principis solitus, consilii tamen copiam præbere.” When approaching the verge of life, and labouring under many diseases or infirmities, the duke's temper, naturally impetuous, though long subdued to the restraints of polished society, often became irritable. As he

had too sound an understanding not to despise every species of flattery, we sometimes entered on discussions, during the course of which he was not always master of himself. But he knew how to repair his errors. I have now before my eyes his last note to me, written by himself in pencil, only a short time before his death. It runs thus:—"I hope you will accept this as an apology for my irritable behaviour when you called this morning. I will explain all when I see you again."—Notwithstanding the libertine life that he had led, he contemplated with great firmness and composure of mind his approaching, and almost imminent dissolution; while Dr. Johnson, a man of exemplary moral conduct, and personally courageous, could not bear the mention of death, nor look, without shuddering, at a thigh-bone in a church-yard. The Duke of Queensberry, like Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire, might have said with truth,

*"Incertus morior, non perturbatus."*

His decease, when it took place, occasioned no ordinary emotion throughout London, on account of the number of individuals who were interested in the distribution of his fortune. Besides his estates in Scotland and in England, he left in money about nine hundred thousand pounds sterling. Nearly seven hundred thousand pounds of this sum he gave away in legacies: the remainder

he bequeathed to the present Countess of Yarmouth. Notwithstanding his very advanced age, he would have lived longer, if he had not accelerated his end by imprudence in eating fruit. Of *him* it might have been said, as of Augustus, "*Causam valetudinis contraxit ex profluvio alvi.*"

*17th August.* — Towards the middle of the month, "the great Frederic," as he was justly denominated by his contemporaries, closed his mortal career. No sovereign in modern ages has been so well entitled to that epithet, if we contemplate the variety of his talents. Francis the First, and Henry the Fourth, of France, were more heroic, and far more amiable: but the universality of Frederic's attainments places him above competition. *We* have not had any prince since Elizabeth, except William the Third, who can be compared with him; and William, though possessing many sublime endowments, was neither himself a man of letters, nor protected men of literary talents. Frederic's reign, of six-and-forty years, divides itself into four distinct periods. The first, comprizing from 1740 to the close of 1745, made him known to Europe, and gave him Silesia. Schwerin acquired that fine province for Prussia, by the victory of Mollwitz. I am old enough to have conversed with officers who fought in that engagement. They all admitted that the king precipitately quitted the

scene of action ; not, indeed, as Horace says *he* left the field of Philippi ; but yet so hastily, as induced Schwerin to advise his majesty to wear his arm in a sling during some days, for the purpose of impressing the troops with a belief that he had been wounded. The second period comprizes ten years, from 1746 to 1756, passed in learned leisure among the eminent poets, philosophers, and wits, whom he had assembled at Sans Souci. They gave *him* fame, and he gave *them* pensions as well as dinners. He received Voltaire with honours such as the younger Dionysius shewed to Plato in antiquity ; but their friendship terminated even more violently than the union between the tyrant of Syracuse and the Athenian sage. Frederic found it indeed easier to retain Silesia in subjection, than to maintain tranquillity among the men of genius who composed his society. Their jealousies, animosities, and mutual recriminations, were embodied in satirical productions which still survive, and manifest the bitter acrimony that subsisted between Voltaire and Maupertuis.

Throughout the third division of Frederic's reign, commencing with 1756, and terminating in 1763, he scarcely tasted a day's repose ; now a conqueror, overrunning Bohemia or Moravia, and menacing Vienna ; to-morrow, a beaten fugitive, without a home, and surrounded by hostile



armies. If he had gained the battle of Colin in 1757, or if he had succeeded before Olmutz in 1758, Maria Theresa must have abandoned her capital, as her grandfather Leopold had done in 1683, when the Vizier Cara Mustapha entered Austria; and as she herself had been compelled to do by the French and Bavarians, at the commencement of her reign. Frederic would have dictated peace on the bank of the Danube, as Bonaparte did in 1805 and in 1809. On the other hand, Francis the First, upon the morning after the defeat of Pavia, or Henry the Fourth, on the night before the combat of Arques, did not stand in a more desperate position, than was Frederic, subsequent to the defeats of Hohkirchen, and of Cunersdorff. His escape, political and personal, from the dangers of "the seven years' war," which had nearly swept from the map of Europe the very name of the Prussian monarchy, holds to prodigy. The fourth and last period of his eventful government, (with the exception of one summer passed in the field, when, in 1778, he opposed Joseph the Second, relative to the Bavarian succession,) presents him occupied in the pacific cares of a wise, economical, and enlightened prince. Apprehensive of the restless ambition of the Emperor Joseph, and repulsed in all his efforts to detach France from Austria; he, when approaching the end of life, most unwill-

ingly turned his views towards England. For no fact is more certain than his partiality to the French, and his aversion to the English nation. Necessity alone compelled him to unite with Great Britain, by signing "the Germanic League," the object of which treaty was to secure the liberties of the German empire. It formed the last act of his foreign policy.

Like Augustus, he expired at the age of about seventy-five; but not as the *second* Cæsar died, "*in osculis Liviae*." No female, either wife or mistress, approached Frederic's couch. Men performed those offices about his person commonly rendered by the other sex in similar circumstances. Mrs. Piozzi, who visited Potzdam a short time after his decease, says that she saw the *Suetonius*, which was carefully preserved, as being the last book opened by the king before he died; the leaf folded down at the passage containing the particulars of Augustus's end. Both were undoubtedly great actors throughout their whole reigns. Both retained their faculties to the last, and suffered little pain in the act of quitting life. The *emperor*, indeed, seems to have been only anxious to leave the stage with grace, on which he had so long performed the principal character: and if the particulars recounted of his death are accurate; if he could cause his hair to be combed, his cheeks to be smoothed, and could

address his friends in the language attributed to him; we may rather assert that he ceased to exist, than that he died. “Sortitus exitum facilem, et qualem semper optaverat,” says Suetonius. The king sunk under a complication of diseases, “*morborum omne genus*,” aggravated by intemperance. Eel pies and polenta accelerated his dissolution; but, like many other princes of his house, he was finally carried off by water on the chest. In the spring of the year 1787, a man who had been his valet, or *hussar de la chambre*, came over to England, and exhibited in London two figures executed in wax. One represented Frederic seated at his desk, engaged in writing; the other displayed his dead body extended in the *catafalque* previous to his interment. Both were habited precisely as Frederic had been; but the former figure had on, from head to foot, the identical uniform and cloaths of every sort worn by his Prussian Majesty when alive, which became the perquisite of the individual in question, by virtue of his office. He assured me that the king expired in *his* arms, and I questioned him respecting the manner of Frederic’s dissolution, as well as his last words. “Monsieur,” answered he, “il étoit suffoqué par l’effet de l’eau qui lui montoit aux poumons. Sentant augmenter la difficulté de respirer, il m’ordonnoit de relever sa tête. Comme je le faisois, il répétoit à chaque instant,

*Plus haut, encore plus haut.* Il est mort avec les mots *plus haut* dans la bouche." Such was the end of "the great Frederic."

He was more feared and admired than beloved; nor was he at all regretted. At no period of his life, indeed, did he inspire affection; nor, probably, feel it warmly for any individual, male, or female. His inhuman treatment of Trenck, whom he seized on neutral ground, and immured in a dungeon of the Star Fort at Magdeburg, where he remained in chains above nine years, excited the abhorrence of all Germany. Trenck took vengeance on Frederic's memory, by holding him up to Europe as another Dionysius. His subjects, however, compensated by honours for their deficiency of attachment towards him. Medals were struck at Berlin, where on one side appears his head, encircled with a radiated crown; while on the reverse, the Genius of Prussia, kneeling, her hands extended, invokes him as a tutelary deity, in the words of Virgil, addressed to the *first* Cæsar,

"Sis bonus, O, felixque tuis!"

Nor are the "*terris datus*," and the "*cœlo redditus*," omitted, which mark his apotheosis. Flattery never offered such homage even to Louis the Fourteenth. Neither Boileau nor Racine ventured to place him among the gods; though Rubens, in his "Luxembourg Gallery," where the mythology

of Greece is strangely blended with Christian allusions, has represented Henry the Fourth taken up to Mount Olympus. Frederic, as I have been assured, gave directions to bury his body on the lawn before the palace of Sans Souci, with his dogs; but a command so repugnant to every sentiment, religious and decorous, was not executed. If we reflect how inferior a rank the Prussian monarchy occupied in the scale of European kingdoms when he acceded to the throne; and how formidable, as well as extensive, he left it at his decease; we cannot be surprised that his subjects exhausted panegyric on his memory. Frederic William, his nephew and successor, one of the most amiable and worthy sovereigns of our time, possessed almost every quality which his predecessor wanted, and wanted almost every quality which his uncle displayed. He failed, it is true, in the campaign of 1792, in Champagne; and was ultimately reduced, three years later, to abandon the confederacy formed against France. But would "the great Frederic" himself, even in the vigour of his age and talents, have succeeded better, if he had been compelled to oppose the revolutionary energies of that republic? It may be justly doubted. His tactics, which at Rosbach acquired him so splendid a victory over the generals of Louis the Fifteenth, would not have enabled him to triumph

with equal facility over the troops of an armed nation, animated by a passionate, though ferocious, love of freedom. His Thuringian laurels might have been changed to cypress, on the plains of Champagne. Perhaps in no respect was he more fortunate, than in the time when he flourished. If, instead of Prince Charles of Lorraine, of Daun, and of Soltikoff, he had been opposed to Massena, to Ney, and to Bonaparte, who can venture to say what would have been the result? Auërstadt might have taken place half a century earlier; and of Frederic, like Charles the Twelfth, it might then have been asserted, that

“He left the name at which the world grew pale,  
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”

*September.*—I passed a part of the autumn at Paris. The affair of the diamond necklace, which during the preceding year had occupied all attention, no longer agitated the minds of its inhabitants. After a long, patient, and minute examination of that mysterious tissue of crimes, the parliament delivered its sentence on Madame de la Motte-Valois. The punishment inflicted, severe and degrading as it was, by no means exceeded, if indeed it equalled, the enormity of her offences. She was branded with a hot iron, and afterwards transferred to the prison of the Salpêtrière, in order there to be confined for the term of her life. Marie

Antoinette little imagined that, in the revolution of six years, she should herself be committed to a more severe place of imprisonment, preparatory to ascending the scaffold. The Cardinal de Rohan, who had evidently been made the dupe and the victim of a train of artifices, was declared innocent; but, though judicially acquitted, he could not be exempted from the imputation of most culpable temerity and fatuity. Nor was he permitted to remain at Paris. By order of the sovereign, he departed immediately for his abbey of *La Chaise Dieu*, situate in the sequestered province of Auvergne. The parliament having, in legal phrase, *purgé* him from the accusation, the Parisians said, that “le parlement l’avoit *purgé*, et le roi l’avoit envoyé à *la Chaise*.” Mademoiselle d’Oliva, who had personated the queen, was put out of court; the tribunal before which she appeared being convinced, that though she aided the accomplishment of Madame de la Motte’s nefarious schemes, yet she did not participate in their guilt. While imprisoned in the Bastile, she was delivered of a son; and about four years subsequent to her liberation from that fortress, she died at the village of Fontenay, near Paris, in a state of extreme destitution, aged scarcely twenty-nine years. A more just, *moderate*, and upright sentence than was pronounced by the parliament of Paris, never, I believe, emanated from any

court. *We* have witnessed *judgments* in our own time, pronounced from the King's Bench in Westminster-hall, to which *all* those epithets could by no means be applied.

Notwithstanding the incontestable proofs of the queen's utter ignorance of the whole atrocious project of Madame de la Motte, yet such were the strong prejudices entertained throughout France against that high-spirited and imprudent princess, that many persons either doubted, or affected to call in question, her innocence. Hume somewhere says, "An English *Whig*, who asserts the reality of the Popish plot under Charles the Second; an Irish *Catholic*, who denies the massacre in 1641; and a Scotch *Jacobite*, who maintains the innocence of Queen Mary,—must be considered as men beyond the reach of argument or reason, and must be left to their prejudices." I should add to this list of persons impervious to common sense, the believer in Marie Antoinette's complicity with a vile female adventurer, in a series of fraud and villainy meriting the galleys. While I am engaged on this subject, I cannot omit to mention that the forgery of Madame de la Motte was not the first attempt made to counterfeit the queen's signature. Eight years earlier, in March 1777, a lady, wife of a treasurer-general of Louis the Sixteenth's household, by name Victoire de Villars, sent a billet, signed Marie Antoinette, to Mademoiselle Bertin,



her majesty's milliner, ordering some articles of dress. Deceived by the similarity of the handwriting, she complied with the order. Madame de Villars was then about twenty-eight years of age, handsome, gallant, and expensive. The queen, when informed of the fact, reprimanded, and pardoned her. Not deterred by such a proof of royal lenity, she repeated the experiment; but Maurepas, then first minister, judiciously concealed the fact from Marie Antoinette, and sent the lady to the Bastile. There she remained twenty months, at the end of which time she was transferred to a convent at Paris. She died a short time afterwards in that confinement. Soon after the termination of Madame de la Motte's trial, the Queen of France brought into the world a daughter, who, happily for herself, survived her birth only a short period. Louis the Sixteenth had already two sons: the dauphin, whose ill health and defective configuration did not promise long life; and the Duke of Normandy, born in the preceding year. But he now calculated with such certainty on a third male heir to the throne, that he had already determined on giving the child the title of Duke of Lorrain; a dignity which never had been conferred on any French prince since the acquisition of that duchy, and its incorporation with the monarchy. His disappointment and vexation were so great, on learning the sex of the

new-born infant, that for some time he refused to enter the queen's bed-chamber. When at length, yielding to the entreaties of those about him, he allowed himself to be conducted to her apartment, he manifested the same ill humour. Holding out her hand to him, "Comment," said she, "vous me boudez parceque je ne suis pas accouchée d'un garçon? Cela depend-il donc de moi? N'est-ce pas Dieu qui dispose de ces affaires?" Louis, who was most warmly attached to his consort, and too reasonable to resist such an appeal to his understanding, soon resumed his wonted complacency. The court of Versailles in 1786 still exhibited a scene of dissipation; but the augmenting disorder and embarrassment in the finances announced an approaching convulsion. Calonne, to whom their management was entrusted, however able, intelligent, and active he might be, inspired little confidence, because his character for principle and economy by no means equalled his talents.

The Duchess de Polignac, who had passed some time in London, on a visit to the French ambassador, during the summer, returned hastily to France, when she received intelligence of the queen's accouchment. Her favour seemed to augment every year. Scarcely did the Duchess de Chevreuse, under Louis the Thirteenth, possess a greater ascendant over Anne of Austria, than Madame de Polignac exercised over the affections of

Marie Antoinette. Notwithstanding the fatal velocity with which France was annually, though insensibly, propelled towards the gulph of revolution and subversion; yet her councils, sustained by the recollection of American emancipation, which her arms had so recently effected, and directed by Vergennes, still maintained a character throughout Europe for wisdom and vigour. Immense sums were expended at Cherbourg, where, in defiance of nature, the French ministers appeared to be determined on forming a great naval port and arsenal, worthy the genius of Richelieu. Sixteen millions sterling were said to be destined for their completion, and two hundred and forty pieces of cannon for their defence. New cones and cassoons sunk in order to form an artificial harbour, perpetually supplied the place of those swallowed up or destroyed by the fury of the winds. With a view to accelerate the progress of so vast a national work, the king, surmounting his habitual inactivity, visited Cherbourg in the course of the summer. Such was the imposing but fallacious aspect of France at this period.

*November and December.*—An unusual sterility of political transactions deserving notice characterizes the close of 1786. Some changes had taken place among the opposition ranks in both houses of parliament. By the decease of the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Surrey quitted the lower

house, where his devotion to Fox, joined to his talents, and a coarse but manly eloquence, rendered him conspicuous, as well as useful. If, however, he occasioned a vacancy in that assembly, he re-appeared under a higher title in another, which during more than eighty years had not beheld within its walls the first peer of Great Britain. Lord Keppel finished likewise his career at this time, and with him became extinct the *vis-county* which Lord Rockingham and Fox had compelled George the Third to bestow on him,—not for his victories over the enemy, but for his sufferings in the cause of party. His name will never be pronounced by posterity in conjunction with those of Hawke, Rodney, Duncan, or Nelson; and it might have been as well for his naval reputation, if, instead of placing him at the head of the English fleet in 1778, for which command his state of health rendered him unfit, Lord North and Lord Sandwich had left him in repose.

Eden having surmounted all the impediments opposed to a commercial treaty between England and France, ventured, under cover of so meritorious a public service, to revisit London during the recess of parliament. Whatever obloquy or reproaches he underwent from his former political friends, he was most graciously received at St. James's; where he presented to his majesty a portrait of Louis the Sixteenth, sent by that prince as a pledge of amity

on the present auspicious occasion, when the two countries entered into bands of trade. Eden deservedly acquired great reputation by his success in this complicated, difficult, and important negotiation, which demanded talents of no ordinary kind. He had, indeed, to combat prejudices, enmities, and obstacles, such as few individuals could have overcome. How little success the Duke of Dorset, then our ambassador at the court of Versailles, anticipated from Eden's mission, may be inferred by the manner in which he mentions it, when writing to myself. His letter is dated "Paris, 6th of April 1786," not long after Eden's arrival in the French capital. "Eden was presented last Tuesday. He was very graciously received by the king and queen. *His treaty* will never come to any thing, though he has the most sanguine hopes about it. He is convinced all will be settled in six months. Such an idea, I have already told him, is the height of folly." The duke, who did not relish so able an interloper in his sheepfold, would probably have witnessed without deep concern the accomplishment of his own prediction. As I concluded the year 1785 with Eden's defection and appointment, so I shall finish the present year with his successful, or rather, triumphant re-appearance on the theatre of public life in London.

1787.

*January.*—While composing the present memoirs, I have endeavoured carefully to avoid any unnecessary mention of myself, well knowing how little interest the concerns of the author can individually excite in the minds of posterity. I am nevertheless about to violate this rule, in order to relate a circumstance in which I was the sole actor. During the first days of January, I amused myself by writing a “Short Review of the Political State of Great Britain at the commencement of 1787.” In it I delineated with an impartial, but, as I readily admit, an imprudent pen, the character of George the Third, of Pitt, and of Fox; unmixed with the slightest tinge of enmity, or of flattery. Of the Prince of Wales I spoke with due admiration, when describing the graces of his figure, manner, conversation, and deportment, all of them formed to captivate mankind; but, with becoming severity, of the faults and errors of his character.

The production being completed in a very few days, without communicating my secret to any person whatever, I called on Debrett, a bookseller who had succeeded to the noted Almon

in Piccadilly. I made him a present of the manuscript, under one condition only,—that of secrecy. Neither he nor I indeed foresaw, nor even imagined, the effect that it would produce; and still less did we anticipate its extensive sale. A few copies of it were sent, by my direction, to certain individuals, on Saturday, the 20th of January; but the pamphlet was not published till Monday, the 22nd of the month. Yet, in the short space of ten days, by the 1st day of February, six editions, each consisting of one thousand or fifteen hundred copies, were already sold. On the 23rd of February, appeared a French translation of it, entitled “Coup-d’Œil sur l’Etat Politique de la Grande Bretagne au commencement de l’Année 1787. Traduit de l’Anglois sur la sixième édition.”—The French translator enriched his work with annotations. Six *Answers* were made to the pamphlet, within four weeks from its publication; one of which was universally, and, I apprehend, justly attributed to Lord Erskine, then attorney-general to the Prince of Wales. To Francis, since become Sir Philip Francis, common report assigned another of these *Replies*. Major Scott assumed the fact, and reasoned on it, when addressing the house of commons in his defence of Mr. Hastings, on the 8th of February. Nor did Francis deny

it. Scott having stigmatized the Reply "as a most atrocious and infamous attempt to oppress a man already persecuted;" then added, "We all know that a pamphlet was published lately, which, though not universally approved, has been universally read. It has already gone through *seven* editions; and I am assured that the publisher expects to sell *twenty thousand* copies of it. Among those suspected, or named as its author, Mr. Hastings himself, and various of his friends, have been mentioned. The publisher has however publicly and unreservedly declared, that neither Mr. Hastings, nor any person either directly or indirectly connected with him, composed that work." In fact, conscious that the writer had made numerous enemies, by the boldness and impartiality of the portraits there sketched, I retained the secret in my own bosom; and this *posthumous* avowal is the first that I have ever publicly made on the subject. The "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers," the "Letters of *Junius*," the "Pursuits of Literature," and many other anonymous productions published in my time, though confidently attributed to particular individuals, have never been *owned*. I believe, we have no *certainty* that "Gulliver's Travels" were written by Swift: yet no doubt is entertained on the point.



Debrett assured me that the servants sent from every part of London to procure the pamphlet in question, burst into his shop, and almost tore it off the counter; many, as he believed, without paying for it. His shop became indeed, during successive days, a scene of altercation and dispute relative to the author; some individuals extolling, while others equally condemned the work. All nevertheless admitted that the person who composed it well knew the characters whom he described. The Prince of Wales expressed great indignation at the parts of the performance which related to himself. He even sent his attorney-general repeatedly to Debrett, peremptorily demanding to know from him the name of the writer; menacing if, he withheld it, to make him personally responsible, and to prosecute him for a libel. But Debrett replied, that the author having *given* him the work, which to him had proved a source of such profit; and having bound him to secrecy; he neither could, in honour, nor in gratitude, betray the trust reposed in him. The Prince's threats, perhaps intended only for purposes of intimidation, produced no consequences. Seven years afterwards, conversing with Debrett on the subject, I asked him what number of copies he had sold? He answered, "At least, as he believed, seventeen thousand;" but he added,

that "not having entered the work at Stationers' Hall, as he ought to have done, it was surreptitiously printed at Edinburgh, and at Dublin, where vast numbers were sold." I desired him to state on paper, as a matter of curiosity, the extent of the sale *in his own shop*. He did so, and I transcribe the note from his original now lying before me.

"SIR,—In answer to your question, I am of opinion that upwards of seventeen thousand copies of the "Short Review" &c. were sold by Sir, your much obliged and most humble servant,

"JOHN DEBRETT.

"Piccadilly, Jan. 28, 1794."

I now resume the thread of my narration.

*8th January.* — Early in the present month died Sir William Draper; a man hardly better known to posterity by his capture of Manilla, than by his correspondence with *Junius*. Sir William was of obscure extraction, but endowed with talents which, whether exerted in the field or in the closet, entitled him to great consideration. His vanity, which led him to call his house at Clifton near Bristol, "Manilla Hall," and there to erect a cenotaph to his fellow-soldiers who fell before that city during the siege, exposed him to invidious comments. But Lord Amherst, in whom vanity was not a predominant passion, gave in like manner the

name of "Montreal" to his seat in Kent. Sir William was doubtless impelled by the desire of displaying his intimacy with the Marquis of Granby, to take up his pen in that nobleman's defence. *Junius's* obligation to his officious friendship was indelible: for, however admirably written may be his letter of the "21st of January 1769," which opened the series of those celebrated compositions, it was Draper's answer, with his signature annexed to it, that drew all eyes towards the two literary combatants.

Great as were *Junius's* talents, yet, if he had been left to exhale his resentment without notice or reply, he might have found it difficult to concentrate on himself the attention of all England. But, the instant that Sir William avowedly entered the lists as Lord Granby's champion, a new interest was awakened in the public mind. From the employment which he had voluntarily undertaken of defending his *friend*, he was speedily compelled to defend *himself*; *Junius*, after exposing the commander-in-chief to national condemnation or derision, turning round upon Draper. In vain did the imprudent auxiliary, pressed by questions of the most painful description, which he had drawn upon his own head, endeavour to provoke his invisible adversary to meet him in Hyde Park. *Junius*, while he admitted that

the appeal to the sword was consistent enough with Sir William's *late* profession, demanded, "After selling the companions of your victory in one instance, and after selling your profession in the other, by what authority do *you* presume to call yourself a soldier?" Nor did he fail to point out the absurdity of attacking an anonymous writer, and then expecting him to quit his incognito, and to declare his real name. Sir William was so injudicious as to renew the correspondence, six months after its first termination. But he derived no advantage from it. *Junius* treated him as the Marchioness de Chaves' secretary treated Gil Blas ; — disarmed and dismissed him. Yet, Draper's letters, if they could be considered separately from those of his antagonist, are classical and elegant productions. When perused, as Sir William's must ever be, in conjunction with the answers made by *Junius*, they shrink into comparative inferiority.

*23rd January.*—The session of parliament at length opened under circumstances of extraordinary tranquillity and unanimity. It eventually proved one of the shortest that has taken place during the present reign, having only lasted a few days more than four months ; while Lord North's parliaments, which were usually convoked in November, rarely rose before July.

The treaty of commerce, recently concluded by Eden, formed the prominent feature of his majesty's speech. Perhaps, however, I ought not to omit the intended formation of a settlement on the coast of New Holland, destined to receive the malefactors with which the prisons of the kingdom overflowed ; a measure rather indicated than announced, but which was carried into execution at this time. As the inability of the leaders of *opposition* to divide the house with the slightest hope of success was well known, the attendance bore a proportion to their diminished consideration. Fox and Burke indeed were present, but Sheridan did not appear in his place. Mr. Matthew Montagu seconded the address to the throne. It was of *him* that General Montagu Mathew, brother to the Earl of Landaff, said in the last house of commons, (upon some mistakes arising relative to their identity, produced by the similarity of their appellations,) "I wish it to be understood that there is no more likeness between Montagu Mathew and Matthew Montagu, than between a chesnut horse and a horse chesnut." Mr. Montagu's paternal name was Robinson ; but the celebrated Mrs. Montagu, his aunt, who so long occupied the first place among the "*gens de lettres*" in London, having adopted him as her heir, he

received her husband's name. At her feet he was brought up; a school more adapted to form a man of taste and improvement, than a statesman or a man of the world. At her decease he inherited not only her ample landed property, but her palace, (as it would be denominated at Rome or at Naples,) situate in Portman-square. Yet thus highly favoured by fortune, and presumptive heir to an Irish barony, (Rokeby,) he has always resembled Pope's *Curio*, of whom the poet says that

—“Curio, restless by the fair one's side,  
Sighs for an *Otho*, and neglects his bride.”

Mr. Montagu's sighs have not indeed been directed to the attainment of a medal, but to the acquisition of a more solid object.

This gentleman, after eulogizing in animated language “the commercial treaty,” as forming more than a compensation for the monopoly of the American market, lost to Great Britain; by a natural transition, reverted to the minister whose genius had effected so beneficial a work. Regardless of the embarrassment which his own praises, however merited they might be, must excite in the chancellor of the exchequer, who sat just below him, Montagu dilated on his resplendent public services. “These,” he said, “justly entitled him to equal honours with those earned by his illustrious father.”

Exalted as the Earl of Chatham's glory had been in war, not less should the son attain in the annals of peace." It might have been thought that such a panegyric, when aided by time and circumstances, formed no bad foundation for an English peerage. Yet, though Mr. Montagu has been a member of various parliaments, and has represented many Cornish boroughs between 1787 and 1812; never apparently losing sight of his object, and occasionally directing his eloquence to its attainment; his efforts have hitherto failed of success. Whether this fact is to be explained by his want of ability, of address, or of perseverance, it is certain that the doors of the British house of peers seem to be closed against him. He still remains a commoner. Fox, while he paid some compliments to Montagu's maiden speech, did not treat with the less derision his predictions of the future financial or commercial benefits that would flow from Eden's treaty. He even indulged in some very severe animadversions on the policy of entering into such connexions with France; described ministers as in *the honeymoon* of their new union with that power; depicted Louis the Sixteenth as more formidable than Louis the Fourteenth had ever been; and declared that he thought it necessary to protest against the

French mode of talking, introduced on that evening. He concluded nevertheless by giving the address his affirmative.

Pitt, who did not fail to perceive this inconsistency, instantly exposed it with all the force of ridicule. He then entered with great ability on the defence of the system itself, which he depicted as fraught with advantages to both countries. "France and England," said Pitt, "have by their past conduct acted as if nature had intended them for mutual destruction. But, I trust, the time is now arrived when they shall justify the beneficent order of the universe, and demonstrate to mankind that they can systematically cultivate a friendly intercourse, cemented by mutual benevolence." Having discussed the subject in a manner equally lucid and masterly, yet less diffusely than Fox had done; "I am happy," concluded he, "that notwithstanding the vehemence with which the right honourable gentleman has *argued against* the address, he is ready to *vote for it*. I hope he will continue the same line of action throughout the session. For, if he makes a practice of voting in direct opposition to his own speeches and arguments, we may look for a greater degree of unanimity than we can otherwise expect." With this sarcastic remark the debate closed, no person rising on



either side of the house to prolong it, though Fox offered a few words of explanation. His inferiority in strength could not be more clearly manifested, nor the parliamentary supremacy of the minister more triumphantly exhibited. The mutability of human affairs was forcibly exemplified on that day. Three years earlier, upon the 23rd of January 1784, Fox, then completely in possession of a devoted majority, after throwing out Pitt's "East India Bill," might have carried almost any vote, however violent, against him. In January 1787, Fox's numbers had sunk so low, that he did not venture on a division; while his antagonist, confirmed in power, popular, and master of both houses, beheld himself, though not yet twenty-eight, more completely arbiter of the cabinet than his father had ever been at any moment of the last or of the present reign.

*26th January—6th February.*—Sheridan, to whom was committed the task of bringing forward the third charge against Hastings, gave notice of his intention to move it early in February. It was only delayed during a few days, in consequence of a wish expressed to examine previously Mr. Middleton, who had been resident or minister at Lucknow, and likewise Sir Elijah Impey; both of whom appearing at the bar, underwent a most severe inter-

rogatory. Pitt manifested, on the other hand, no less impatience to enter on the examination of the commercial treaty with France; but Fox strenuously resisted any precipitation relative to a point of such magnitude and importance. With great earnestness he deprecated the slightest violation of the subsisting treaties with Portugal, and loudly demanded, as a necessary preliminary to all debate on a subject so new, as well as so intricate, that a call of the house should take place. After various ineffectual attempts, during several successive days, to attain it by concession on the part of the minister, who maintained that it was unnecessary, the question came to issue. A more angry and personal altercation than arose on that evening, could scarcely have occurred in a French "constituent assembly;" Cornwall the Speaker not interposing his authority, as he ought to have done, for moderating such intemperate warmth. Pitt having moved "to take into consideration on the 13th of February, the treaty recently signed between his majesty and the most Christian king," Lord George Cavendish, uncle to the Duke of Devonshire, proposed to substitute as an amendment, the words, "20th of February." Lord George, who then represented the county of Derby, possessed very limited talents; but his rank, his fortune, and

the hereditary probity of the Cavendish family, which in no individual of that line was more recognized than in *him*, supplied the place of ability. Nor had Fox a more zealous adherent within those walls.

Burke exhibited a total want of self-control throughout the whole discussion. "The chancellor of the exchequer," said he, "with that confined intellect which leads men of narrow views to look at great objects through contracted mediums, seems to consider this treaty as a mere commercial matter. He regards it as the concern of two little counting-houses, not of two rival states; as if the sign of the *Fleur de Lis*, and the sign of the *Red Lion*, were contending which house should obtain the best custom. I see it in a more national point of view. We are about to unite with that power, against which, nature, not less than policy, has designed us to form a balance." The minister having in the course of the evening severely attacked Fox, "When animadversion," exclaimed Burke, "is seasoned by wit, the satire, though keen, becomes softened. But when *gross, miserable, and stupid abuse* assumes the character of admonition, it recoils on its author. The chancellor of the exchequer declares that he had the *misfortune* to sit for a short period, in my friend's place. No doubt he spoke from

his feelings : for, to an aspiring young man, never easy except in the possession of power, a situation on this side of the house must necessarily be irksome. Mounted as he is on a stage, and exhibiting with his *merrymen* about him, by the aid of a ladder which a *state carpenter* has contrived ; scarcely does he deign even to look on creatures so low as the opposition."

Wilberforce interposing, expressed his concern that a person possessed of such endowments should be enslaved by his own temper. But Pitt did not commit his defence to any lips except his own. "I appeal," said he, "to the judgment of all present, whether a speech more abusive, more personal, or more *outrageous*, has ever been heard. *With his character, he has lost all command over himself, and he now rarely speaks without exciting an equal mixture of disgust and of compassion.*" Fox, with calmness and moderation, endeavoured to protect his friend, if he had been capable of hearing reason. Instead, however, of repressing his violence, he gave it the rein. Yet, not without demonstrating that even in his fall, he knew how to draw his robe with grace about him. "I thank the chancellor of the exchequer," said Burke, "for his *compassion* : I even regard the obligation as greater, because he has so little to spare. With respect to his *contempt*,

that being a commodity in which he deals largely, I return it on his hands, as of no sort of value." A division taking place, ministers carried the question by a vast majority; only eighty-nine individuals supporting Lord George Cavendish's motion, while it was negatived by two hundred and thirteen.

That Burke exposed himself to much censure on that evening by his intemperate conduct, whereas Fox displayed great self-control, cannot be disputed. We must not, however, overlook the essential difference in their positions, and in their formation of mind. Fox, endowed by nature with uncommon suavity and placability of disposition, was rarely thrown off his guard, and he might still be considered as young, having only just completed his thirty-eighth year. The death of his nephew, Lord Holland, then a boy of thirteen, might at any moment have placed him in the house of peers, and once more have put him in possession of an ample fortune. A change of sovereigns would infallibly raise him again to power, and render him master of the cabinet. Marriage, a state for which he betrayed no aversion, opened to him the means of repairing all his losses at play, if he contracted an advantageous alliance. The buoyancy of his temper, sustained by conviviality, society, and amuse-

ment, did not allow him to sink under the inconveniencies of poverty. Carlton-house, and Brookes's Club, still prolonged his nights; while Mrs. Siddons attracted him to the theatre, and, in *Belvidera*, or in *Calista*, charmed away for the moment all painful recollections of political defeat, or exclusion from office. How often have I seen him, seated in the orchestra of Drury-lane theatre, among the musicians, for the purpose of more accurately hearing and viewing that incomparable actress, pay her the copious tribute of his tears!

But, widely different was Burke's situation, and far less exhilarating were his prospects. His original patron, the Marquis of Rockingham, being dead, he could only look to the Duke of Portland for future remuneration, if ever the party of which he constituted the head should again force their way into the royal closet. Linked with Fox, their destinies appeared to be inseparable; nor did Burke foresee at that time, how soon the ties which united them would be rent asunder. Still less did he anticipate, that the "aspiring young man, surrounded by his *merrymen*, and mounted on Jenkinson's shoulders," would extend support to his declining age, and smooth the evening of his day. Scarcely more than six years elapsed, before I saw Burke seated on the treasury bench, between

Pitt and Dundas. In 1787, he was verging towards sixty, and could not, like Fox, extend his views to any remote futurity. His temper, naturally irritable and impatient of contradiction, became sharpened by disappointments. Nor could he find resources in the clubs of St. James's-street, in the boxes of Drury-lane theatre, or in the orgies of Carlton-house. At his retreat near Beaconsfield, he would, indeed, have tasted all the felicity which a classic mind could derive from retirement, letters, and a learned leisure; but, contracted finances, together with the toil of parliamentary attendance, embittered his enjoyments. Of fame he had sufficient, and he was weary of political opposition; yet unable to retire from parliament, which to *him* had afforded no harvest, except bays. So pressing, indeed, were his wants become in 1793, that I have been assured he sold the two pensions of eighteen hundred pounds each, for three lives, then granted him by the crown, without almost a week's delay. They were put up to sale on the Exchange, and produced about thirty-six thousand pounds. The present Earl of Hardwicke is one of those three lives, as his son the late Lord Royston was another. To the French Revolution and its sanguinary excesses, he therefore owed the independence of his last

years. He even owed more : for, the efforts of mind that he exerted to stem the torrent of subversion, and to awaken resistance among the powers of Europe, redeemed his character in the estimation of the country. After the king's recovery from his first great intellectual malady in 1789, Burke had fallen very low in the general opinion. I repeat, however, that all circumstances considered, Burke appears most resplendent, as well as exempt from imputations of inconsistency, previous to Lord North's resignation.

*7th February.*—The acrimonious debate to which I have alluded, was followed, on the subsequent evening, by the most splendid display of eloquence and talent which has been exhibited in the house of commons during the present reign. This pre-eminence seems to be accorded by all parties to Sheridan's memorable speech respecting Hastings's treatment of the Begums or Princesses of Oude. It occupied considerably more than five hours in the delivery, attracted the most intense attention, and was succeeded, at its close, by a general, involuntary pause or hum of admiration, which lasted several minutes. Unquestionably, it formed a most extraordinary effort of human genius, labour, and wit, stamped throughout with the characteristic marks of Sheridan's



genius: for no man accustomed to his style of composition, oral or written, could for an instant mistake the author. In many parts and passages it was absolutely dramatic; not less so than the "Duenna," or the "School for Scandal." Those pieces belong indeed to comedy, while the charge in question partook, it may be said, of the nature of tragedy. Yet so admirably could Sheridan adapt his theme to circumstances, that he contrived to lend point to incidents the most revolting, and excited smiles while detailing scenes of the deepest distress. Burke, it is true, frequently passed with rapid transitions, from indignation or invective, to raillery, or levity. But *he* was borne away by an ardent imagination that often outran his reason. Sheridan's invocations, allusions, and exclamations the most pathetic, though cloathed with all the garb of nature or of passion, were not less the fruit of consummate art and mature reflection. He neither lost his temper, his memory, nor his judgment, throughout the whole performance; blending the legal accuracy of the bar, when stating facts or depositions of witnesses, with the most impassioned appeals to justice, pity, and humanity. Availing himself with dexterity of the ample materials which the subject offered him; presenting objects to the imagination

under forms the most picturesque, appalling, and impressive; he led captive his audience, of whom a large proportion was very incapable of discriminating truth from misrepresentation or exaggeration. The very scene of these transactions, which lay in Asia, on the banks of the Ganges, or the Jumna; the personages who performed the principal parts,—viziers, princesses, eunuchs, and rajahs; zenanas and harems entered by violence; jaghires arbitrarily resumed, and treasures seized on by military force;—all these accessories, when decorated with the charms of oratory, subdued his hearers, and left them in breathless admiration, accompanied or followed by conviction.

I have said that many passages were dramatic. It was thus that he compared the governor-general of Bengal successively to a number of animate, or inanimate things. "He is," said Sheridan, "a mixture of the *trickster* and the *tyrant*; at once a *Scapin*, and a *Dionysius*. A crooked, circuitous policy regulates all his actions. He can no more go straight forward to his object, than a *snake* can proceed without writhing in curves, or can imitate the undeviating swiftness of an arrow. He boasts of his resources—namely Cheyt Sing and the Begums—precisely as a *highwayman* would boast of Bagshot and Hounslow."—"The unfortunate

inhabitants of Oude remind me of a collection of birds, who observing a felon *kite* in the air, dread his approach, as they behold him mount with redoubled vigour on the wing, accumulated vengeance depicted in his eye, prepared to pounce on his destined prey with assurance of success." Having described the acts of horror perpetrated in the palace of Sujah Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude, "Great God of justice!" exclaimed he, "canst thou, from thy eternal throne, look down upon such premeditated outrages, and not affix on the perpetrators some signal mark of divine displeasure!" This is the very sentiment expressed by *Marcus*, in the opening scene of the first act of 'Cato.' "The only emblem," Sheridan asserted, "which could aptly designate Hastings in his public capacity, was that of a man holding in one hand a bloody sceptre, while with the other he was employed in picking pockets." Having attributed to him almost every crime which can stain or debase our nature; cruelty, fraud, hypocrisy, venality, rapacity, and breach of faith;—having protested that in the pages of Machiavel no acts of similar atrocity were to be found;—having accused him of accepting "a present, or rather a bribe, of one hundred thousand pounds;"—having expatiated on his inhumanity in turning out to the merciless seasons,

and a more merciless soldiery, the wife and the mother of Sujah Dowlah, whom that prince, at the moment of his decease, had entrusted to the governor-general's protection;—Sheridan then made his appeal to the moral feelings and character of the house. It was conceived with great beauty, and well calculated to produce the deepest impression. "This," said he, "is no party question. However divided we may be on political matters, we shall, I trust, join hand and heart, in reprobating inhumanity, and delivering over to punishment those who use unlimited authority for purposes of tyranny and oppression."

It must not, however, be imagined that the whole weight of Sheridan's eloquence fell exclusively on Hastings. Two other individuals shared it with him. The first was Sir Elijah Impey, chief justice of Bengal, who having lent his legal co-operation and assistance to the seizure of the treasures possessed by the Princesses of Oude, had repaired in person to that province, nine hundred miles distant from the seat of government, in order to take the necessary depositions. In terms of bitter raillery, mixed with classic wit, Sheridan held up to derision and reprobation, "the *Grotius* of India, degrading the dignity of his high office; laying aside the character of a judge, and soil-

ing his pure ermine, by condescending to execute the functions of a pettifogging attorney ; running up and down the country, ferreting out affidavits, and carrying them upon his shoulders in a bundle, like a pedlar with his pack."—"Sir Elijah says," continued Sheridan, "he gave his advice, not as a judge, but as a friend ; and in that character he took the affidavits. Friendship impelled him to scud up and down India, made him oblivious of all he owed to himself, and to the majesty of justice."

The third person at whose expense Sheridan exercised his talents, was Middleton, minister, during these transactions, from the Bengal government to the Nabob of Oude. He had returned to England with a vast fortune. During the course of his examination, his recollection relative to many events which took place while he was the British resident at Lucknow, seemed to be so completely worn out, that no traces of their existence could be elicited from him by the closest interrogatory. We have, however, seen him outdone in this respect, by an Italian, at the bar of the house of lords. Such a total and unaccountable oblivion of recent facts, performed, or at least witnessed by himself, obtained for him the appellation of "Memory Middleton," as "Lucus, à non lucendo." "In the persecution of the

'Begums," observed Sheridan, "an army were sent to execute an arrest, a siege was undertaken for a note of hand, and a rebellion was proved by affidavit. There was a trading general, (Colonel Hannay,) an auctioneer ambassador, and a chief-judge secretary." The antithesis of these expressions entertained even those who were the most disinclined to agree in his assertions or deductions. Never was the triumph of genius over a popular assembly more signally displayed than in the speech of Sheridan!

After the first tumult of applause had subsided, an attempt was made to adjourn by Sir William Dolben, who stated the general exhausture of the house, as a reason for postponing the discussion. But Fox opposed it, observing that the hour (twelve) by no means justified a suspension of the debate. "It is pretty obvious," added he, "that the speech just delivered has made no ordinary impression; and I see no reason why we may not come to the question. If any friend of Mr. Hastings should wish to offer arguments calculated to efface that impression, the present moment appears to me the fit time for doing it." Major Scott declaring that he could convict Sheridan of many gross misrepresentations of fact; and professing his readiness to proceed instantly, if such should be the

pleasure of the house, Pitt interposed. "I will not," said he, "at present state in what way I have made up my mind to vote. Yet I mean to deliver my sentiments at large upon the *motion*. With regard to the speech which we have heard, it has unquestionably produced all the effect which genius can command. A more able speech has perhaps never been pronounced : but I can by no means agree that because one dazzling display of oratory has been exhibited, other gentlemen ought to be precluded from giving their opinions. For these reasons, I, for one, wish an immediate adjournment." Fox by no means concurred, however, with the chancellor of the exchequer, and he sustained his dissent by very plausible arguments. "My honourable friend," observed he, "has spoken ably. But why has he so done? It is because he exerted himself in a right cause ; because he has a heart capable of sympathizing with the woes of those whose innocence and defenceless condition claim protection. His speech has been denominated eloquent. Eloquent, no doubt, it is : *so much so, indeed, that all I have ever read or heard of oratory, either in this assembly or elsewhere, sink to nothing in the comparison.* But why adjourn, except because the arguments offered being unanswerable, it is wished to gain time, with a view of substituting negotiation, man-

œuvre, and delay, in the place of truth and reason?"

Before he sat down, Fox addressing himself personally to Pitt, implored him, from regard to his own character, as well as for the character of the house, not to vote against the question. While urging this point, having used language bordering on invective, he was severely reprehended by Wilberforce. With the liberality of mind which always characterized him, Fox instantly made reparation. "I protest," said he, "it was not my intention to give offence. We are both (meaning the chancellor of the exchequer and himself) too apt to say harsher things to each other, than are perhaps warrantable. On my part, these asperities of expression are, I am pretty certain, generally unprovoked: but, they take place much too frequently." So placable, and prompt to obliterate all recollections of a vindictive nature, was Fox! His antagonist by no means manifested equal suavity of disposition. Spencer Stanhope, one of the two representatives for Hull, avowed that "his mind was nearly made up by the almost *miraculous* speech which he had just heard." And Matthew Montagu declared that "his opinion respecting the treatment of the Begums, which, when he came down to the house, he thought was settled, had been shaken, if not



overturned." Such were the effects of that fascinating composition! We must nevertheless bear in mind that these conversions were moral, not political. The affair stood unconnected with party, though the prosecution originated with opposition. On whichever side the minister might ultimately vote, his official situation would remain the same. If the "Westminster scrutiny," or the "Irish propositions," had formed the subject of Sheridan's attack, his pathetic appeals to justice and humanity would not probably have made such numerous proselytes on the ministerial benches. Many persons even considered as ludicrous, invocations to the "God of *justice*," solemnly pronounced by a man whose whole life formed a perpetual act of private *injustice* towards his own creditors, and who owed his personal liberty to his seat in the house of commons. The adjournment was at length carried without any division.

*8th February.*—On the resumption of the debate, Major Scott endeavoured to counteract the recent effect of Sheridan's eloquence, by contrasting the calamities and disgraces which befel us in every other quarter of the globe, with the acquisitions of territory gained in the East, between 1776 and 1783, under Hastings's administration. Having shewn that Dundas had moved for the recall of Hastings, in May 1782,

“ because, in his opinion, the governor-general had forfeited the confidence of the native princes of India, and *could not conclude a peace;*” Scott observed, that most unfortunately for Dundas’s assertion, Hastings *did actually conclude an honourable peace with the Mharattas*, in the very month, and almost on the very day, when the *motion* to which he alluded was made in the house. “ I have since,” added Scott, “ heard him avow within these walls his satisfaction at the resistance made by the court of East India Proprietors to that vote, because he was convinced they had thereby rendered a very essential service to the company, and to Great Britain.” Turning to the members of opposition, he demanded why, if they considered Hastings’s treatment of the Princesses of Oude as so criminal, they did not remove and recall him, when they were themselves in office, in 1783? Scott next proceeded to answer the specific accusation of seizing the treasures of the Begums; adducing a great variety of evidence to prove that those princesses had taken part in the rebellion of Cheyt Sing, and had actually raised troops with intent to support his cause. As the last and best proof of Hastings’s public merit in committing the very act now criminally charged against him, Scott depicted the critical situation of our empire in the East, be-

tween October 1780, and the commencement of the year 1783; assailed on every quarter, and menaced monthly with subversion. Hyder Ally at the gates of Madras, pursuing our defeated troops; while the fleet of France, under Suffrein, remained cruizing, unopposed, in the Bay of Bengal. Sir Eyre Coote, who commanded the forces sent to oppose Hyder, looking solely to the government-general for the payment of his army, on which depended the fate of India. The Bengal treasury empty, and the pay of the soldiery, European as well as native, many months in arrear. "One fact," concluded Scott, "no man can doubt; namely, that the sum procured from the Princesses of Oude could not have been raised from any other source. And without that supply, we might now have been debating here how Mr. Hastings should be impeached,—not for saving, but for losing India."

These arguments and facts, though not decorated with the fascinating ornaments of Sheridan's eloquence, yet made at the time, and still continue, after the lapse of more than thirty years, to produce on my mind the deepest conviction of their solidity. Such was not, however, their effect on the chancellor of the exchequer, whose speech drew more than ordinary attention, as on *his* mode of

seeing the charge, and of voting upon it, no man doubted, must depend Hastings's acquittal or condemnation.

Pitt did not leave it long uncertain on which side he should give his vote. After observing that as he had always considered the present charge to be marked apparently with the strongest features of criminality and cruelty, so he had endeavoured most conscientiously to guard against any sort of prejudice; he added, that he had compared the accusation minutely with the evidence. The interval which had elapsed since the unprecedented display of oratory exhibited on the preceding night, having allowed him to recover from its immediate impression, and to examine the proofs adduced in its support, he was now ready to concur with the *motion*. Yet he admitted the resumption of the jaghires to be highly justifiable, though he condemned the seizure of the Begums' treasures. If their confiscation was an act of forfeiture, designed to operate as an example of severity; or even on the pretext of state necessity, provided the facts were well established; in either case, he said, he should acquit the governor-general of all culpability. But he professed himself unable to discover any such sources of justification. Sheridan acknowledged the liberality of Pitt's proceeding; and

Fox, though with less animation, joined in recognitions of the minister's candour.

While the leaders on both sides thus united against an individual who, by the resources which he called into action, had saved India when attacked by a combination of European and Asiatic enemies; no person of eminence, or of distinguished talents, came forward in his defence. Silence pervaded the treasury bench; neither Mr. William Grenville, nor Lord Mulgrave, nor the master of the rolls, nor the attorney-general, uttering a word in his justification. The solicitor-general (Macdonald) alone declared, that as, whatever opinion he might form relative to the charge under examination, he never could agree to an impeachment, he therefore should not vote on the pending question. Dempster had however the honesty to rise and oppose the current, as did Le Mesurier, one of the members for Southwark; but the latter was compelled to desist by loud and repeated cries of *Question*. Only sixty-eight persons negatived Sheridan's proposition. One hundred and seventy-five found Hastings culpable.

Dundas, though he took no part in the discussion, voted with the minister. Lord North was not present during any part of the evening. His health and his sight, both which

betrayed symptoms of decay, allowed him rarely to attend in his place, or to take any active share in debate. I voted with the minority on that night, and I believe, if the subject could be agitated anew, I should act again in the same manner. Not that I am convinced of the complicity of the Begums in the rebellion of Cheyt Sing, which was by no means satisfactorily demonstrated. Nor do I conceive that, on principles of private morality, the act of seizing on their treasures can be justified. But the peril to the state was extreme. The deed had been done, and Bengal was saved by that most timely operation of despotic power. If ever any act rested on overwhelming state necessity for its justification, this was the measure. Yet Pitt affected not to perceive, or not to recognize it. I say, *affected*; — for no man endowed with reason could deny the awful and alarming state of our Eastern possessions at that eventful period, when the energy and resources of Hastings snatched them from destruction.

It was not even pretended that the princesses in question had committed their cause to the exertions of Burke, as the Sicilians entrusted the redress of Verres's exactions to the eloquence of Cicero; who having himself filled the office of quæstor in the island, had witnessed the enormities of which he complained; whereas

Burke and his friends only collected their information from the governor-general's implacable enemies. With as little truth could it be asserted that Hastings had converted the money thus taken to his own use, as Rumbold did in his treatment of the Nabob of Arcot. He had, it is true, received a present from Asoph Dowlah, Nabob of Oude, amounting in value to nearly one hundred thousand pounds; but he carried it to the company's account. He accompanied that act with the expression of a wish that they would confer it on himself. Well, indeed, might he make such a request, when, after having passed his whole life in the company's service, he had not acquired even such a competence as almost every civil servant contrived to amass in the course of ten or twelve years! And who were the men to impeach Hastings? The same individuals, who, only four years earlier, having by a sacrifice of all public principle in uniting with Lord North, forced their way into the cabinet; and finding themselves odious to the sovereign, while they had lost the confidence of the country; attempted to seize,—not the treasure of an individual, but the property and possessions of a great chartered company. Nay, who undertook to unhinge the British constitution itself, in order to consolidate their own power:—an act

of criminal ambition and liberticide, with which Pitt reproached them day by day! Yet with these very men he now joined, to oppress one of the few British subjects, who during the eclipse of the American war, placed, as he was, in a situation equally eminent and perilous, had preserved the extensive provinces entrusted to his care. Posterity will probably affix its condemnation to such a line of policy, which, as it appears to me, was unworthy of a statesman, whose first duty should have impelled him to extend a shield over the preserver of India, even though he might not have privately approved every measure of Hastings's administration.

9th—28th February.—After the termination of the charge relative to the Princesses of Oude, no further progress was made in the prosecution during the remainder of the month of February; almost every evening being exclusively occupied in discussions respecting the commercial treaty with France. It opened, indeed, a field of speculation, argument, and dispute, not less ample, and scarcely less important, than *the Irish propositions* had presented in 1785. Fox and Pitt assumed, throughout every debate which arose on the treaty, opinions and principles by no means analogous to their respective characters. The former, whose enlarged mind and placable



disposition should naturally have inclined or impelled him to embrace a policy favourable to the extinction of antient enmities between the two countries, seemed to have adopted an opposite system. He constantly maintained that France should be prospectively considered, not only as a rival nation, but with an eye of jealousy and distrust, incompatible with any approach towards political or commercial connexion. This position Fox endeavoured to demonstrate and to impress, by appeals to experience in past periods of our history. Pitt, on the other hand, cast by nature in a more Antigallican mould, and formed of more unaccommodating materials, exhibited an ardent desire to enter into bands of amity, cemented by reciprocal advantages, with the court of Versailles. Nor did he fail to elucidate and to recommend the proposition, by a train of reasoning calculated for persuading even those persons who had imbibed the most inveterate hereditary prepossessions on the subject. This seeming exchange of characters might nevertheless admit of explanation, by comparing the respective situations of the two individuals. The minister, anxious to repair the financial breaches made by a calamitous war, eagerly embraced measures which promised an encrease of revenue, an extension of trade, and a new market for our manufactures. I be-

lieve, Fox, if he had held a place in the cabinet, would have seen nearly through the same optics, and would have been actuated by similar views of public benefit. But his exclusion from office naturally influenced, if not his judgment, yet his line of parliamentary conduct.

Lord North, on account of the state of his health, never once made his appearance in the house during the agitation of this important question. His place was, however, supplied by Sir Grey Cooper, who took part in almost every discussion, and who yielded to few in his accurate knowledge of the complicated interests which it included. Sheridan opposed the measure with great pertinacity, substituting, when necessary, wit and ingenuity in the place of solid argument. If the leaders of opposition could have excited the principal manufacturers throughout the kingdom to petition against the French treaty, as they did in the case of *the Irish propositions*, administration might have been embarrassed by such an impediment. But, with the exception of a very limited number, the manufacturing towns and counties expressed opinions highly favourable to the ministerial plans. Fox, who, when introducing his celebrated *East India Bill*, had allowed parliament no time to pause, complained heavily of the indecent haste with which, he said, the actual

measure was propelled through its different stages. Finding himself unable by remonstrances to produce an adjournment, he quitted the house, followed by all his friends ; after protesting against such ill-advised precipitancy, which, he declared, would entail disgrace on the councils of the crown. But Pitt, sustained by the general approbation, was not deterred by these denunciations. Unable to make any deep impression on the chancellor of the exchequer, Sheridan turned his artillery against the absent negotiator of the treaty, whom he overwhelmed with contumelious ridicule. " I trust," said Sheridan, " that when he returns to his duty in this assembly, he will publicly declare his error in almost every opinion which he maintained relative to the *Irish propositions*. And I hope he will address *circular letters* to the manufacturers, assuring them that he has not renounced one of his commercial principles or doctrines, though he has adopted new ones for the present business ; which he will be ready, however, again to abandon, as soon as he sets foot in England." Pitt did not undertake the personal defence of Eden ; perhaps from a consciousness that these reproaches, however severe, were in some degree just. On every division, ministers carried the question by more than two to one. I was in all the majorities ; being fully persuaded then, as I

am now, that no measure adopted by Pitt, during his long administration, was more calculated to augment the national prosperity, while it tended insensibly to extinguish the animosity between France and Great Britain, than *the commercial treaty*.

The opposition, however diminished in numbers the party might be, received at this time, a most valuable accession of talents in the person of Mr. Grey, now Earl Grey. He had been elected member for the county of Northumberland, late in the last session, when, on the decease of the duke of that name, Lord Algernon Percy succeeded to the peerage as Lord Louvaine. Grey sprung from a very noble and antient stock. His father, a general officer of merit, decorated with the order of the Bath, was the younger brother and presumptive heir of Sir Henry Grey, a baronet of George the Second's creation. Mr. Grey, when he first took his seat in the house of commons, had not long accomplished his two-and-twentieth year. His figure, tall and elegantly formed, prepossessed in his favour. The smiles of the Duchess of Devonshire, and her blandishments, which few persons at any period of life could resist, were believed to have operated very powerfully in attaching him to the party that she espoused:—for he seemed irresolute, at his outset in par-

liament, which side he should take ; professed a reluctance to oppose government, as well as respect for administration ; and disclaimed all party feelings. But he insensibly threw aside these restraints. During the progress of the French commercial treaty, Grey rose, and resisted the measure with great force, yet without any mixture of indecorous acrimony or violence. His enunciation was clear, sonorous, and distinct. His language, correct, nervous, and flowing ; free from affectation or study. His sentiments, natural ; and delivered with dignity, as well as grace. With the single exception of Pitt, I have not witnessed any individual in my time, who on his first attempt has excited such expectations of future eminence as did Grey. These expectations, it must be admitted, he has fully realized. He stood, indeed, considered as a member of the house, upon much higher ground than Pitt, at his entrance into parliament ; representing, as he did, a great county ; while the other, brought in by Sir James Lowther, at the Duke of Rutland's request, sate during nearly three years for a borough. It was Pitt's *name*, and filial connexion with the illustrious minister who humbled France and Spain, that operated as a talisman in his favour. Grey, though endowed with eminent abilities, and of most decorous man-

ners, yet wanted Fox's open amenity of character. He was equally destitute of Sheridan's wit, good humour, and invincible suavity of disposition. To the chancellor of the exchequer he bore much more analogy. Both were distant, grave, lofty, retired, and sometimes repulsive. I shall have frequent occasion to return to Grey, in the course of these memoirs.

Scarcely had the address to the crown on the commercial treaty with France been voted by a great majority, when the minister introduced a bill for the consolidation of duties, which conciliated the approbation of all parties. The speech with which he opened, and detailed its operation on the revenue, as well as on the commerce of Great Britain, might challenge the annals of parliament to produce a finer specimen of financial eloquence. Without 'redundancy' it was copious, destitute of all extraneous matter, or of every unnecessary ornament; perspicuous even in those parts which, from the nature of the subject, it was difficult to render intelligible. If Sheridan's powers of oratory, directed to inflame the passions, to dazzle the imagination, and to mislead the judgment, while exerted in the cause of persecution, could call out such universal applause; how much more solid admiration was due to Pitt's efforts for retrieving and ameliorating the finances of

a country, which, only four years earlier, seemed to be plunged in almost remediless embarrassments! Already England began to re-appear on the theatre of Europe, not less powerful than before the American war. Notwithstanding the violent language which had recently occurred between Pitt and Burke, the latter, appeased by the coincidence and support of the chancellor of the exchequer on the late charge against Hastings, rose to express his high approbation of the measure for consolidating the duties. "I will not," said Burke, "content myself with a sullen acquiescence, but will bear testimony to the masterly and perspicuous manner in which a plan has been developed, that promises accommodation to the merchant, combined with augmentation and advantage to the revenue." Sir Grey Cooper, after reclaiming for his absent friend Lord North the merit of having originated this salutary scheme, during the time when he presided at the treasury board, joined in similar eulogiums, both on the proposition for simplifying the general receipt, and on the ability manifested in its disclosure. Even Fox recognized these merits, though more reluctantly, and with some hesitation. Sheridan alone remained wholly silent.

During the progress of *the commercial treaty* through the house, Fox, while he earnestly de-

precated any departure from our antient connexion with Portugal, inveighed against the danger of confiding in the faith of France. At the same time he drew an alarming and exaggerated picture of her resources, power, and ambition. Even in the personal qualities of the reigning sovereign, and the exertions made by him to aggrandize his country, Fox apprehended cause for distrust, and motives for alienation. If these opinions were not assumed for the purpose of impeding the measure then under discussion, Fox must have formed very erroneous conceptions of the state of the French monarchy, as well as of the prince who then filled the throne, at the beginning of 1787. Far from being in a condition to meditate conquests, or to undertake aggressions, the revolution which within six years brought Louis the Sixteenth to the scaffold may be said to have already commenced. The deficiency in the revenues rendered necessary a recourse to extraordinary remedies. Louis, instead of preparing betimes for a conflict with his subjects, (as Henry the Fourth himself would have done in a similar situation,) adopted measures calculated to lay him at the mercy of the Parisian populace. With the most generous and benign intentions, but without judgment, and contrary to every maxim of prudence or of policy, he broke suc-



cessively the household troops. These bands, composed almost exclusively of individuals nobly descended, being thus reduced, left the throne dependant for support on the army at large; the greater part of which body had imbibed in America republican principles, or was corrupted by the manners of a dissolute, revolutionary capital. Such was the position, and such were the embarrassments of the King, when Calonne proposed to him to convoke a sort of epitome or substitute for the states-general; to be chosen from among the nobility, the clergy, and the magistracy of his kingdom. They were denominated "*les notables*," and had not been summoned during one hundred and sixty years, when Louis the Thirteenth assembled them for a somewhat similar purpose; namely, to furnish supplies towards the necessities of the crown.

If, when Calonne advised the convocation of this aristocratic body, he could have remained master of their deliberations;—in other words, if he had secured a good majority, by means analogous to those which all ministers have practised in this country;—no doubt the "*notables*" might have extricated the state, while they laid the first foundations of a limited, constitutional monarchy in France. Among the whole series of princes who have reigned since

Hugh Capet, not one was so formed, by the yielding and inert moderation of his character, for conceding to his people *a constitution*, and for surrendering the odious, obsolete, or oppressive prerogatives of the throne, as Louis the Sixteenth. Or, if the privileged orders had possessed discernment enough to perceive that they must be overturned, unless by great sacrifices of every kind they sustained the sovereign, and retained the lower orders in their allegiance; the monarchy, public credit, and general obedience, might all have been upheld. But the king was weak, irresolute, vacillating, and incapable of any act of energy or decision: the "*notables*" were destitute of a spark of wisdom, love of their country, or even enlarged principles of self-preservation; attached only with blind, unfeeling selfishness, to their own separate interests, as a distinct order of men. Lastly, the comptroller-general was rash, sanguine, presumptuous, and inexperienced in the management of popular assemblies.

I have been much in Calonne's society during the period of time which he passed here in England, between 1787 and his decease in 1802. In his person he exceeded the common height, thin, active, and always in motion. His physiognomy was very expressive; gay, full of intelligence, never clouded, perpetually animated by

hope and cheerfulness. The calamities of the house of Bourbon and of France were not to be traced in his features, nor recognized in his conversation. Buoyant from natural disposition, fertile in expedients and resources, ever looking forward with confidence, he could not be subdued by adverse fortune. Nor was he deficient in the attainments, information, and knowledge of a financier. But he wanted the probity and stern severity of *Sully*; while he equally wanted the sound judgment, the application to business, the spirit of order, the enlightened economy, and the elevated principles of moral and political action, all which met in *Colbert*. In what manner the Duke of Dorset, our ambassador at the court of Versailles, thought of Calonne, as well as of the assembly, may be gathered from his language in a letter addressed to myself, dated "Paris, 4th January, 1787." "L'assemblée des notables," says he, "is to be held at Versailles, the 29th of this month. It is a curious piece of juggling of the comptroller-general. However, I wish him success, as he is really a fine open-hearted fellow, and wishes to cultivate friendship and amity with England."

Previous to the meeting of this assembly, which was further postponed to the 22nd of February, an event took place that equally

embarrassed and enfeebled the councils of the French crown. I mean, the death of the Count de Vergennes. He was the most able and enterprising statesman whom France had seen, since the dismissal of the Duke de Choiseul by Louis the Fifteenth. Though Vergennes specially directed the foreign department, yet he was likewise president of the council of finances; and the estimation in which he was held by his own sovereign, when combined with the high opinion entertained of his talents throughout Europe, conduced to give stability to the existing order of things. The extreme weakness of Louis's character remained in a great measure concealed even from his own subjects, while Vergennes still survived; and his decease unquestionably contributed to accelerate the progress of those revolutionary principles which speedily overturned the monarchy. The Duke of Dorset always regarded him as an ambitious minister, inimical to the general repose of Europe; but, in particular, hostile to England. Writing to me on the 9th of February 1786, from Paris, on the state of public affairs, he adds, "Every thing bears the appearance of tranquillity; but I believe the cabinet at Versailles is working hard in every cabinet in Europe, and particularly to gain that of Petersburgh."—"The spirit of intrigue

which Vergennes is endowed with, is more dangerous, in my opinion, to the balance of power, than all the mighty armies of Louis the Fourteenth. And if we do not watch him close, we shall be in a most unpleasant situation." I am ready to admit, when citing the testimony of the duke, that his own talents were moderate; but his situation and connexions about the French court enabled him to know many important facts from high authority. It cannot be doubted that Vergennes had meditated a rupture with this country in 1786. The East Indies would have formed the first scene of hostilities; and troops were actually sent to the island of Mauritius, in order to attack us, in conjunction with Tippoo, on the coast of Coromandel. Sir John Macpherson, who was then temporary governor-general of Bengal, and who attained full information on the subject, has often assured me that such were unquestionably the designs of the cabinet of Versailles. Notwithstanding the pecuniary difficulties under which Louis the Sixteenth laboured in 1787, I believe, if Vergennes had survived a few months longer, he would not have allowed the Prussian troops, commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, to enter Amsterdam without opposition, and to extinguish the French faction throughout the seven United

Provinces. The Count de Montmorin succeeded to Vergennes' office, but not to his high reputation.

About this time Louis the Sixteenth sent over a new ambassador to London. The intellectual and physical infirmities of Count d'Adhemar combined to incapacitate him for longer filling that employment. He was replaced by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, brother to the Count of the same name, then one of the secretaries of state, and head of the naval department. The Chevalier was soon afterwards created a marquis. I lived in habits of great intimacy with him, from his first arrival in England, nearly to the termination of his embassy. Nature had not bestowed on him any external advantages. Neither his person, manners, nor address, seemed to be adapted for a drawing-room; and his sight was so defective, that it approached to blindness. Scarcely could he distinguish objects, unless brought close to his eye. But he compensated for these corporeal defects, by a sound, clear understanding, and habits of business. Though he seldom attempted to speak English, he understood the language; having resided a long time in America, as minister from France, during the war carried on against the Trans-Atlantic colonies. Such a mission did not seem to lay a

good foundation for his favourable reception here, or to form a recommendation at St. James's. It is a fact, that on the day when he went to the palace to be presented to the king, he wore at his button-hole the insignia of the order of *Cincinnatus*, which had been conferred on him by *Washington*. Fortunately, arriving before his majesty came out of his closet to commence the levee, some of his friends had time to represent to the new ambassador, the impropriety of appearing in the presence of George the Third decorated with an order instituted by one of his former subjects. La Luzerne instantly took it off, and put it in his pocket.

As he was unmarried, being a Knight of Malta; the Viscountess de la Luzerne, a daughter of the Count de Montmorin, who had married the ambassador's nephew, came over from France to do the honours of his house. After the king's first great intellectual malady, in June 1789, La Luzerne gave a splendid entertainment, in commemoration of his recovery. The queen was present at it, with her court; and during supper, the viscountess, as representing the French ambassadress, stood behind her majesty's chair. Within five years afterwards, I went to pay my respects to her at a small lodging, situate in

George-street, Portman-square, just behind the noble mansion which the ambassador had occupied in that square. She received me in a room where stood two neat white beds, and appeared to support with great equanimity her change of fortune. But she did not long survive, and I have heard that she accelerated her own end, which, I believe, took place at Rouen. She was young, amiable, and of most engaging manners. Her father, Count de Montmorin, perished early in the revolution. Nor did the ambassador himself live to witness the execution of his unfortunate master. In 1792 he was attacked with a paralytic complaint, for which he repaired to Southampton, where he expired. The calamities of his country, together with his own individual misfortunes flowing from that source, embittered his latter days, and hastened his dissolution. His remains being sent over to Caen in Normandy, for the purpose of interment, the revolutionary populace of the city precipitated his body into the river Orne, which flows through the place.

The bishoprick of Lincoln becoming vacant at this time, Pitt procured it for Dr. Pretyman, who had formerly been his preceptor, and then filled the office of his private secretary. The opposition, to whom Pretyman had rendered himself obnoxious in this latter capacity, at-



tacked him with all the weapons of wit, satire, and malevolence. In allusion to his having been brought up at Pembroke Hall in the University of Cambridge, the "Rolliad" denominates him,

"Pembroke's pale pride, in Pitt's præcordia plac'd ;"

and levels many coarse or illiberal jests on his person, which was tall, thin, and destitute of elegance. An ode, depicting him as a man destitute of all regard to veracity, and which began with the words

"Hail to the lyar!——"

was likewise assigned to Pretymán, by the authors of the "Probationary Odes." Not satisfied with this abuse, they overwhelmed him under a mass of classic epigrams, composed in English, Latin, Greek, French, and Italian. His duplicity, as private secretary to Pitt, constituted the charge made against him throughout these lampoons, which only served to prove the ingenious hostility of their composers. In 1805, on the death of Dr. Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, Pitt, who was then first minister for the second time, made the strongest exertions to raise Pretymán to the metropolitan see. But his majesty pertinaciously refused his consent. I know from a near relative of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, that when

the minister urged the matter warmly, George the Third replied, "Mr. Pitt, don't press me further on the subject; for I am determined to confer it on *Sutton*, whom you brought under my eye, when he was made Dean of Windsor at your recommendation. And it would be indecorous that we should be known to differ on this point." As the best proof of his unalterable resolution to raise Dr. Manners Sutton to the vacant archiepiscopal see, the king authorized the distinguished individual who related to me the above-mentioned particulars,—one of his oldest servants,—to write to Mrs. Manners Sutton, Dr. Sutton's wife, assuring her, in his majesty's name, of his fixed determination on the subject.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is a grandson of John, third Duke of Rutland, whose youngest son, Lord George Manners, assumed the name of Sutton, on succeeding to the estate of Lord Lexington. Being the fourth son of Lord George, he was brought up to the ecclesiastical profession; and at the age of three-and-twenty became attached to Miss Thoroton. She stood in no remote degree of consanguinity to him; as her mother, who was an illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Rutland, had married Mr. Thoroton, secretary to the celebrated Marquis of Granby. The lovers were in fact second cou-

sins. Being together at Belvoir Castle, in the year 1778, when she was only about eighteen years of age, he proposed to her an elopement to Gretna Green. She consented, and they set off on foot; but, before they could reach the hired post-chaise, stationed at four miles' distance, the young lady lost both her shoes in the dirty road. After their marriage at Gretna, not possessing pecuniary means sufficient to enable them to return, they wrote to their respective relations, requesting assistance for the purpose. Lord George Sutton displayed, under these circumstances, much less displeasure towards his son, than was exhibited by Mrs. Drake, the Duke of Rutland's mistress, and grandmother to the bride. It was not without difficulty that Mrs. Drake consented to allow her granddaughter the sum of forty pounds a year. Lord George, encumbered with a very numerous family, and having contracted a second marriage not calculated to benefit his affairs, was unable to make his son a larger annual allowance. But he procured for Mr. Sutton a curacy at Canwick, of nearly the same value, to which place the newly-married couple repaired. There they remained during some years, subsisting on about one hundred and twenty pounds per annum, though they soon had several children. It is a fact that the archbishop still preserves the pair

of brass candlesticks which, when curate of Canwick, he constantly had in use. His own son, Lieutenant-Colonel Sutton, so assured me.

John, Duke of Rutland, as well as his son, the Marquis of Granby, having both survived their wives, and having each several natural children; the illegitimate issue of the father and of the son used to sit down promiscuously together at table, at Belvoir Castle, where they were brought up with the duke's legitimate descendants. Colonel John Sutton, elder brother of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who now possesses the Lexington estate of Kelham, near Newark-upon-Trent, married in like manner his cousin, a natural daughter of the Marquis of Granby. On many occasions, the duke even displayed a preference for his grandchildren by Mrs. Drake, above his legitimate offspring. The valuable living of Bottesworth, in the county of Leicesters, not far from Belvoir, (in the church of which village the Dukes of Rutland are interred,) becoming vacant; Lord George Sutton made the warmest application to the duke in favour of his son Charles, who still remained at his curacy of Canwick. But he met with a refusal; the duke conferring it on his illegitimate grandson, Mr. Thoroton, Mrs. Manners Sutton's *brother*, rather than on her *husband*. Lord George was, however, enabled soon after-

wards to present his son with the living of Averham, near Kelham, to which he removed, and where he remained till he received the deanery of Peterborough. Mr. Pitt, whose obligations to *Charles*, late Duke of Rutland, were great, and who testified throughout his whole political life a natural predilection for the *Manners* family, procured the dean's promotion to the bishoprick of Norwich, on the decease of Dr. Horne. Finally, the same ministerial patronage made him dean of Windsor, thus placing him under the king's eye; though Pitt did not the less endeavour to elevate his own tutor to the metropolitan dignity, as the Emperor Charles the Fifth had formerly raised his preceptor to the papal throne.

The present archbishop is a prelate of very moderate intellectual endowments; as were likewise his two immediate predecessors, Moore and Cornwallis. But he possesses great command over himself, irreproachable moral conduct, activity in promoting works of charity or benevolence, and all the essential qualities for filling with decent propriety the archiepiscopal chair, to which Pitt's protection, finally aided by royal favour, have elevated him. Nor must his high birth be forgotten, which formed a strong additional recommendation to the king's notice. He is not an economist, though he has seven daughters

still unmarried ; and whenever the see becomes vacant, no treasures will probably be discovered in his coffers. Fond of field-sports, and a *good shot*, he nevertheless abstains from touching a gun. During a visit that he made to Kelham, three or four years ago, he was much pressed to take a fowling-piece ; but, conscious of its indecorum, he declined it, contenting himself to accompany the sportsmen, and to mark down the birds. Possibly it might likewise occur to the archbishop, that one of his predecessors in the see of Canterbury, Abbot, about two hundred years ago, being engaged in the chase, had the misfortune to kill his gamekeeper with a cross-bow. And an accident similar to that which took place under James the First, might again happen under George the Third. On the whole, he must be esteemed a most fortunate individual ; since, in addition to the prodigious ecclesiastical elevation which he has attained, he has beheld his eldest son elected speaker of the house of commons ; while his own younger brother has, by Pitt's selection, rather than by any eminent legal talents, been made chancellor of Ireland, and created a peer of Great Britain. It was not before the nineteenth century, that the name of *Manners*, previously distinguished in the field and on the ocean, has become known in the church, at the bar, and in the senate.

*2nd March.*—Early in March, Hastings's prosecution was renewed, Mr. Pelham opening the next charge, which consisted of three distinct accusations; namely, infraction of treaty, personal corruption, and abuse of power to purposes of tyranny. The scene of these imputed offences lay at Furruckabad, a city not far removed from Agra, in the north of Hindostan; the nabob of which territory was the individual on whom the governor-general had exercised the acts of violence in question. Mr. Pelham (a name connected with some of the best ministerial recollections of George the Second's reign) was the eldest son of Lord Pelham, subsequently created Earl of Chichester. He filled, indeed, himself, early in the present century, very respectably, under Addington's administration, during a considerable time, the office of secretary of state for the home department. Endowed with moderate abilities, but sustained by great family connexions; his mind cultivated by travel, and his understanding matured by an early entrance into parliament; Mr. Pelham could not however rely, like Sheridan, on appeals to the imagination or the passions, in order to produce conviction. His speech, though long, and abounding in minute details, many of which were not of a nature deeply to interest his audience, yet excited attention.

Major Scott rose to defend Hastings; and in reply to the imputation of his having corruptly accepted from the Nabob of Oude a present of ten lac of rupees, on which act Mr. Pelham had animadverted with great severity, Scott observed, "The governor-general immediately communicated the fact to the court of directors. He had not even received the money at the time when he transmitted to them the information. As soon as it was actually paid, he transferred it to the company's treasury; accompanying the payment with a request, that as his own fortune was small, they would give it him back on some future day. Probably he did not conceive, that as Lord Clive had received *six* hundred thousand pounds for *acquiring* an empire, he should be deemed presumptuous in asking for *one* hundred thousand, as a remuneration for *preserving* that empire."

Hastings did not however want other defenders, some of whom were even seated near the minister on the treasury bench. Though Mr. William Grenville remained silent, Lord Mulgrave denied that the house of commons could be fit judges of a governor-general's administration, who, placed at an immense distance from England, surrounded with dangers and enemies, had acted on the whole in a manner so glorious, as well as salutary, for his coun-



try. But Lord Hood's appearance on the floor, as an advocate of similar principles, produced a still deeper impression. This veteran commander, who had maintained the lustre of the British flag throughout all the humiliating period of Lord North's administration,—unaccustomed to speak in parliament, and strongly attached to Pitt, yet presented himself to the Speaker's notice. Inured from the commencement of his life to that stormy element on which he had earned his reputation and his honours, he might say,

——— "Rude am I in speech,

And little blest with the set phrase of peace ;"

but every word that he uttered was devoured by the audience. Placing the subject of the pending prosecution at once on the ground of public expediency, he besought the house to reflect on the consequences that must result to the state, if with too scrupulous accuracy they called to a severe account those individuals who had filled important stations abroad in a period of hostility. With great simplicity of diction he stated the difficulties to which he had been, himself, subjected ; and the acts of unauthorized violence or oppression to which he had been necessitated to recur, for the purpose of subsisting the English fleet, when under his command in the West Indies, during the

American war. "Acts, which, however indispensable to the preservation of his ships and men," he added, "yet if the government had not stood between him and legal prosecutions, he should in all probability have been doomed to linger out the remainder of his days in prison."—"As for myself," concluded he, "at my period of life, I can entertain no expectation of being again employed on active foreign service: but I speak for those who come after me. Love of my country impels me to prevent a precedent, which will impede all future exertions, if we punish the acts of authority, however repugnant they may be to our modes of conducting ourselves, which the saviour of India has committed, in order to extricate and preserve the countries entrusted to his care."

If this forcible appeal to the common sense and justice of the house had been made on the 13th of June 1786, when the charge relative to Cheyt Sing was brought forward, instead of the 2nd of March 1787, it might have given a new aspect to the whole prosecution. Other individuals of weight, encouraged by such an example, would probably have come forward on the same trace. Pitt and Dundas, whatever part they might have secretly resolved to take relative to Hastings, had not committed themselves beyond the power of recall at that

period. Or, if the governor-general, better advised, had maturely considered the ability, numbers, and inveteracy of his accusers; as well as the very doubtful nature of the ministerial support which he credulously anticipated as certain;—and if, instead of injudiciously imposing on himself the difficult task of justifying every separate act of power to which he had recourse during his stay in India, he had put his defence on the general issue of his critical position, which emancipated him from ordinary rules of action;—finally, if he had pleaded his distinguished and successful services to the state, as forming a shield which ought to protect him against party rage, or parliamentary violence;—it seems difficult to suppose that such intrenchments could have been stormed. Pitt himself recognized their strength, in his reply to Lord Hood. After bearing the most ample testimony, not only to his noble friend's private virtues, but to his high professional ability; the minister laboured with no ordinary eloquence to demonstrate, that there did not exist the slightest analogy between Lord Hood's violations of right, or seizure of property, and the crimes laid to the charge of the late governor-general. The former, he said, were dictated by an imperious necessity: for the latter, no such defence had

been attempted. Having reasoned this point, more as a moralist, or a casuist, than as a statesman; rather in the spirit of Addison, or of Johnson, than as Lord Burleigh, or as his own father, when at the head of the councils of this country, was accustomed to contemplate political objects; Pitt then reverted to Hastings's general merits in the course of his high public employment.

“There was, I admit,” said he, “a period when such a defence might have been set up; but that time is passed. If, at the commencement of the present enquiry, it had been urged, that whatever faults the late governor-general might have committed, his brilliant and meritorious services effaced or counterbalanced them; the house would have had to weigh his crimes against his virtues. But, at present, we cannot allow any such consideration to operate on our minds. We are deciding, not on *general* merits or demerits. It is on the criminality or the innocence of a *particular* transaction that we are called to determine. *Mr. Hastings has disclaimed all benefit arising from the consideration of his services.* He has declared that he desires no *set-off* on that score; being persuaded that the very facts on which are founded the charges, when they come to be investigated, will be found entitled to the approbation

of this house. After such a voluntary act on his part, ought we to extend a shield between him and enquiry? Still less can we now do it, having proceeded so far in the examination." It is evident that Hastings's imprudence facilitated the means of attacking him with success. If he had followed Lord Clive's example,—who, besides being himself in parliament, brought in as his agent, not a military officer, but an able member of the long robe,—he might, like Lord Clive, have escaped impeachment. Pitt virtually and distinctly acknowledged it. But, ought not a wise statesman to have warned of his danger a meritorious public servant, who had saved India? Should he not have informed the governor-general on what grounds only he could extend ministerial protection and support? Pitt, on the contrary, allowed him to enter the snare. Posterity will decide on the wisdom, the policy, and the generosity of such a proceeding. Only fifty members, of whom I was one, negatived Mr. Pelham's *motion*. One hundred and twelve supported it. Dundas spoke and voted with Pitt on that evening: but neither Fox nor Sheridan took any part in the discussion.

28th February—6th March.—The *commercial treaty* with France, which had occasioned such difference of opinion in the lower house, gave

rise among the peers to debates, if possible, still more personal and acrimonious. Not the least singular circumstance attending them was, that the same individuals who lately opposed each other in one assembly, being transferred to the other, furnished the principal materials of controversy. Pitt, well aware that neither the Marquis of Carmarthen, nor Lord Sydney, was competent to explain and defend the treaty, took care to entrust that task to more able hands. Jenkinson, become Lord Hawksbury, was selected for the purpose. He performed it with consummate ability, answering the arguments adduced by Lord Stormont, and by Watson, Bishop of Llandaff; both of whom deprecated a departure from the antient treaties subsisting with Portugal, in order, as they asserted, to form dangerous connexions with France. At the same time, not being in the cabinet, nor holding any ostensible place in administration, Lord Hawksbury took care to state repeatedly that he was no minister. "I desire, once for all, my lords," said he, "that it may not be supposed I either possess or claim any authority, except the influence which my arguments give me." But the Duke of Norfolk, now become an efficient member of the house, after commenting on Lord Hawksbury's declaration, added, "I am aware that the noble lord who

has undertaken to support the treaty, and to justify ministers, *has on his shoulders the principal burthen of government. He is a peer of great weight and authority.* Nevertheless, as he has informed us that he is no minister, he cannot incur any responsibility. It is therefore the duty of ministers, either to speak in their own persons, or to place the noble lord in a ministerial situation, so that he may be rendered responsible for his assertions respecting measures of administration." Then, after alluding to the reform in the representation of the people, which Pitt had held out to the country previous as well as subsequent to his entrance on office, the duke added, "No such reform has however been effected in the other house. *And as to this assembly, some individuals have lately been sent here, whom, if all circumstances are considered, the people, I believe, little expected to see elevated to such rank.*"

The severity of these animadversions called up successively the two secretaries of state; which drew from Lord Carlisle the remark, that "he was happy to find the *death-like* silence of ministers at length broken." But the concluding observation, so personally levelled at the peers who had recently been created, would have remained without reply, if Lord Delaval, who was one of them, had not demanded some

explanation on the subject. Having alluded to the reflections thrown upon the distinguished persons whom his majesty's favour had entitled to seats in that house, "Does the noble duke," continued he, "think that there was any circumstance in the characters of their ancestors which ought to disqualify their present descendants from being advanced to the dignity of the British peerage? Does he mean to insinuate that their ancestors had been stigmatized as men of suspicious allegiance? or does the noble duke mean to infer that '*there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons?*'" The wit of this last sarcasm, which made so obvious an allusion to the duke's recantation of the errors of the Romish church, induced the Duke of Manchester to speak to order. But Lord Delaval, after apologizing for any unintentional violation which he might have committed of the forms, or on the decorum of the house, added: "As the noble duke has thought proper to animadvert on the lately-created peers, being myself one of them, and utterly unconscious as I am of meriting any such observations, I imagine he will expect that something should be said in their behalf by one at least of the number." The Duke of Norfolk, who throughout his whole life manifested greater promptitude



to *give* offence than to *resent* affronts; finding likewise that he had only attracted towards himself reflections more severe than those which he desired to throw on others; now apologized to Lord Delaval, and the business terminated.

I was particularly acquainted with that nobleman before, as well as after, his elevation to the British peerage. He was a younger brother of Sir Francis Blake Delaval, a man celebrated in the annals of wit and gallantry towards the end of George the Second's reign. At seventy years of age, Lord Delaval's person remained graceful and slender; his manners elegant, gay, and pleasing. Descended from a very antient and distinguished family, seated in the county of Northumberland, where he possessed great landed property, he was created a baronet soon after the present king's accession. During his whole life, pleasure constituted the first object of his pursuit. Representing, as he did, the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed in more than one parliament, and supporting the *coalition* administration at their outset; he was included by Fox among the *Irish* peers of the month of September 1783, whom his majesty consented to raise to that dignity, though he refused to make any addition to the *British* peerage. Of course Lord Delaval voted for the *East India Bill*, when brought into the house of commons;

but, afterwards finding that it was equally odious at St. James's, and reprobated throughout the country, he retracted his support, and joined the new minister. He even rose in his place, and justified his conduct in a manly manner. For such an act of *apostacy*, as it was denominated by his old allies, they assigned him a conspicuous niche in the "Rolliad." It is probable that the Duke of Norfolk alluded in his speech to the lines commemorating Lord Delaval's double creation. They were severe.

"The noble *convert*, Berwick's honour'd choice,  
That faithful echo of *the people's* voice,  
One day, to gain an *Irish* title glad,  
For Fox he voted;—so *the people* bade.  
'Mongst *English* lords ambitious grown to sit,  
Next day *the people* bade him vote for Pitt.  
To join the stream, our patriot, nothing loath,  
By turns discreetly gave his voice to both."

Not satisfied with this revenge, the same wits composed a poem called "The Delavaliad," parodied from Orlando's verses to Rosalind, in "As you like It." But Lord Delaval stood in no awe of such lampoons. He attained to a very advanced age, and dying without a son, his titles, (both of which had been acquired within the space of three years, from two rival ministers,) expired with him. I shall have occasion to mention his youngest daughter, the Countess of Tyrconnel, in the sequel of these memoirs.

1st—10th *March*.—On the following day, the discussion of the “commercial treaty” was renewed in the house of peers; Lord Sydney and the Marquis of Carmarthen observing total silence, while the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Hawksbury undertook the defence of the measure. So little parliamentary assistance did Pitt derive from his colleagues in office! The Bishop of Llandaff, a prelate of aspiring talents, and his own historian; who looked forward to Durham, or to Winchester, as the recompence of his exertions; attacked with no ordinary ability the proposed treaty. He was supported by Lord Stormont, who inveighed against it, as a sacrifice of solid power, for uncertain profit. But the circumstance which gave peculiar interest to the debate of that evening, was the part taken by the Marquis of Lansdown. In the course of a speech such as only a statesman could have conceived or pronounced, he passed the whole treaty in review; examined its features, pointed out its merits and its defects; approved its principle, but did not the less condemn many of its practical details. Treating with contempt the narrow prejudice by which France is considered as *the natural enemy* of this country, he equally reprobated the folly of denominating her *perfidious* and *deceitful* as a nation. With the hand of a master, he drew a

species of contrast between Louis the Fourteenth, a prince animated only by insatiable ambition, and his estimable successor who then filled the throne, in whose bosom the love of his people and of justice always predominated. "The *natural enemy* of Great Britain, my lords," continued he, "and equally of every other state, is the sovereign of Prussia, who maintains an immense military force, altogether disproportionate to his revenues, and to his dominions."

Having thus recognized the abstract wisdom and policy of the measure, he next, with equal force of language and strength of reason, delineated the errors committed in its execution. Among these he did not omit to enumerate the silence and acquiescence of ministers, while France was occupied in constructing the stupendous works at Cherburgh. Nor did he less strongly arraign other features of the treaty, which regarded Ireland and the East Indies; leaving his audience, at the close, unable to decide whether he had most censured or applauded the administration, and subjecting himself to the imputation of having "spoken on both sides of the question." From this charge he nevertheless justified himself with ingenuity, during one of the subsequent debates. "I am accused," said Lord Lansdown, "of speaking on both sides, because I have not, from motives of

friendship towards ministers, forbore to state my objections to many parts of the measure under discussion; and because I have not, in complaisance to the opposition, withheld my tribute of applause to the principle. The fact is, that throughout life I have stood aloof from parties. It constitutes my pride and my principle, to belong to no faction; but to approve every measure on its own ground, free from all connexion. Such is my political creed." His repartee to the Earl of Carlisle, who thought proper to reproach him with having apparently drawn many of the amicable sentiments that he professed towards France "from the novels of a circulating library, or from sentimental comedies," turned the laugh on his side. That nobleman had, himself, composed some poetic and dramatic works, which, it was thought, would not secure him immortality. "With regard," observed the marquis, "to the expressions applied to the French nation and government, which I am supposed to have selected from sentimental novels, or sentimental comedies, I can assure the noble earl, *I never write either; but I entertain a profound respect for those who do.*"

16th March.—Burke, while conducting the prosecution against Hastings, enjoyed the singular advantage of being surrounded by a constellation of extraordinary men, whose talents were

devoted to his purposes, passions, and prejudices. He had only to select his instrument, while he superintended the execution. For bringing forward the present charge, he chose Sir James Erskine, a young Scotch baronet, who, in addition to considerable talents, stood in a close degree of consanguinity to Lord Loughborough, his mother being the only sister of that nobleman. Among the individuals whose great legal and parliamentary ability raised them to the British peerage under the reign of George the Third, none possessed more versatile faculties than Wedderburn, or more adapted to the atmosphere of a court. Though placed by the *coalition* administration, in 1783, at the head of the commissioners to whom the great seal was confided; and though he remained during ten years steadily attached to Lord North and Fox; yet he never rendered himself personally obnoxious either to the king or to Pitt. Early in 1793, when Lord Thurlow came to a decided rupture with that minister, Lord Loughborough succeeded to the dignity of chancellor. Being childless, having passed his sixtieth year, and entertaining no hope of issue; — for he had been twice married; — he adopted the sons of his sister; and before he had held the great seal three years, he succeeded in procuring a new patent, entailing the barony

of Loughborough on his two nephews in succession. Of these, Sir James Erskine was the eldest. Nor did his ambition rest satisfied with such an acquisition. Early in the present century, his patient assiduities, constant attendance on the king and queen, whom he commonly followed every autumn to Weymouth, and the devotion which he manifested towards them;—these courtly qualities were rewarded with an earldom, reverting, as in the former instance, to Sir James Erskine and his younger brother. Such marks of royal and ministerial favour, very rarely bestowed on any subject, prove how much superior was Wedderburn to Thurlow in the arts of ingratiating, whatever parity there might exist between them in their professional or parliamentary talents. Thurlow, who four times held the great seal under as many different administrations, only obtained a barony for his paternal nephew; while Wedderburn made his sister's son an earl, by the title of Rosslyn.

Sir James Erskine developed with considerable ability the charge confided to him, which principally regarded improvident or corrupt contracts made by Hastings. Those for providing bullocks, elephants, opium, and many other articles furnished by individuals whom the governor-general favoured or patronized,

constituted the subjects of crimination. Among these censurable acts of expenditure, stood conspicuous the augmentation of Sir Eyre Coote's salary, as commander-in-chief, from sixteen thousand pounds a year to more than double that sum, which proposition was carried by Hastings in council. It formed nevertheless a singular fact, that not even his accusers attributed to him the smallest participation in the profits of any transaction enumerated; though it appeared that a relation of Mr. Francis, named Tilghman, who returned from Bengal in the same ship with him to Europe, shared in the advantages of the opium contract, one of those which produced the largest sum of money to the contractor. Francis, who did not attempt to contest the truth of the allegation, contented himself with challenging Major Scott to bring forward a specific charge on the subject. Pitt displayed on that night an extent of intellect, memory, and powers of mind, so wonderful, while discussing the subject, that it might have been supposed he had passed his whole life in active employment on the banks of the Ganges.

With the exception of Burke, of Francis, and of Major Scott, I doubt if any individual present, including even Dundas, possessed so accurate a knowledge of the countries and concerns



under examination. It might well excite astonishment, how a man placed in his public situation could find time to acquire, or to retain, such a mass of information ; on every point of which he reasoned with transcendent capacity, omitting not the minutest circumstance. The present Marquis of Cholmondeley, who never felt any predilection for Pitt, and who, I believe, never once voted with him in the course of both their lives, yet did justice to his amazing talents. Conversing with him on the subject of that minister, about five years ago, Lord Cholmondeley said, " Pitt once sent to me, requesting my attendance on urgent business. Sir John Anstruther brought me the message. I was then at the head of the Prince of Wales's family, and I accordingly waited on him in Downing-street. The affair regarded a matter of accounts. I find it impossible to do justice to the perspicuity and rapidity of his calculations. In the course of a few minutes he went through and settled every item, leaving me lost in admiration at his ability." This was the testimony of an opponent, and an enemy.

Having followed Sir James Erskine, article by article, through all the branches of the charge, some of which he treated as undeserving of investigation or destitute of foundation, Pitt finally proposed an amendment ; offering

to concur with the *motion* inculcating Hastings, but only on three distinct points of accusation ; namely, the two contracts, one for bullocks, the other for opium ; and the encreased salary given to Sir Eyre Coote. At the same time, he suggested to Burke the propriety of his speedily coming to a determination respecting the charges which he intended still to bring forward, with a view to attaining the ends of substantial justice. Burke, while he treated the minister's last proposition as founded in amity, refused to concur in his amendment. Only two persons rose to speak in Hastings's exculpation, one of whom was Major Scott. He admitted that some of the contracts were matters of favour, particularly the contract for providing opium. But he observed, that if the profits of them all were as exorbitant in fact, as it had been attempted to prove, they would not collectively amount to more than one moiety of the gain arising to the contractors from the loan of a single year, negotiated in London, during the late unfortunate war. Yet Burke, who had menaced Lord North with impeachment for his corrupt loans, was now closely united with him : while Hastings, who saved India, lay under prosecution. The other individual who refused to concur in criminating the governor-general, was Dempster. He remarked, that

“no man, however inimical he might be, had insinuated that one rupee of the various sums enumerated, ever found its way into Mr. Hastings’s pocket.” These considerations produced no effect on the division. Burke having moved to include in the charge two other contracts, besides the three heads of accusation in which Pitt offered to concur, carried the question by nine votes, against the minister. Only twenty-six members, of which small number I was one, negatived Sir James Erskine’s *motion*, declaring that “the charge contained matter for impeaching Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors.” The majority did not exceed sixty.

*22nd March.*—Notwithstanding Pitt’s entire or partial concurrence in so many of the charges, he displayed precisely at this time a generous indignation, when Francis attempted to render the committee appointed to draw up the articles a vehicle for his purposes of calumnious malevolence. An individual named Mercer, having been called before that committee, with a view to prove from his deposition Hastings’s culpability in the contract for opium; Francis, to whom Mercer had addressed a letter full of the grossest reflections on the late governor-general, so managed the examination, as to have it entered at full length on their minutes.

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WILLIAM PITT.

*Engraved by G. Pinckney from a miniature by Sir Godfrey Kneller.*

London. Richard Bentley, 1836.



By this unworthy artifice, he contrived to render the house of commons his accomplices in recording a libel. Pitt, holding the letter in his hand, as it appeared in the printed minutes, commented on the whole proceeding with great severity. Francis attempted to justify himself by maintaining, that if he had only produced an extract from Mercer's letter, he might have been charged with suppression of evidence. Burke defended his conduct, and Sheridan accused the minister with giving way to unbecoming warmth. But Pitt contended that the document had evidently been written at Francis's suggestion; adding, that "no degree of indignation could be too strong, where the house itself had been made instrumental to an act of such palpable malice and injustice."

Under an imputation so severe, Francis, though possessing a high spirit, took no step to prove his innocence. Yet, with men actuated by such motives as Pitt imputed to them, did he nevertheless join in impeaching a great functionary, to whom the preservation of our dominions in India was as much due, as Gibraltar was saved by Eliott, or Jamaica by Rodney. Of all Hastings's enemies, Francis might be justly esteemed the most inveterate and implacable. He was likewise the most formidable, not only from his accurate local knowledge

obtained while on the spot, but by the composition of his mind. Unlike Burke, Francis's hatred, cool, sagacious, and controlled by his judgment, enabled him to direct his weapon with malignant skill. Burke's rancour exhausted itself in a torrent of invective, always decorated with classic allusions, frequently illuminated by wit and humour. Francis, like *Junius*, tore his victim with deliberate, scientific ability; was rarely carried away by passion, preserved his enmity ever fresh, laboured with unceasing perseverance, and made his hostility felt by deeds still more than by words. Such was the different formation of the two men!

To Sir James Erskine, after the interval of a few days, (like Homer's heroes, supplying each other's place,) succeeded Mr. Windham, who opened the sixth charge against Hastings, for "violations or infractions of the treaty concluded by him with Fyzoola Khan, Nabob of Rohilcund." He performed the task with that logical perspicuity, characteristic of his frame of mind, as well as of his style of eloquence, which always borrowed aid from metaphysical sources. Major Scott not only denied the existence of the pretended grievances, which he endeavoured to disprove by a calm recital of the circumstances attending the whole transaction; but he maintained that Fyzoola Khan

was one of the most independant and happy native princes of Hindostan, having never received an injury of any kind from the British government. "In fact," added he, "have the Princesses of Oude complained? Has Fyzoola Khan sent home a complaint? The late governor-general left Bengal above two years ago. More than ten weeks before the last packet dispatched from Calcutta to England quitted the Ganges, intelligence had been there received of the charges brought forward against him in this assembly. There existed no impediment to the transmission of complaints. I have recently seen or received many letters from India, and not a single word is to be found accusing or inculpatng Mr. Hastings. So much the reverse is the fact, that temples have even been erected to him at Benares."

Burke, who felt it necessary to answer Scott, did not fail to attack him with the arms of ridicule, pointed by taste and learning. "I know not," exclaimed he, "whether the assertion relative to the temples constructed in honour of Mr. Hastings merits belief. But I know that there are temples dedicated throughout India to two very dissimilar divinities; to Brama and to Vistnou, the protecting deities, from whom benefits are supposed to descend; and to the evil principle or power, whose enmity



and malignity are deprecated. Perhaps the temple in question may be one of gratitude to the presiding divinities of Hindostan, for having removed *a monster* under whose tyranny the unfortunate natives suffered so many evils. Oh ! *Templa quam dilecta !*" Such were the weapons with which his enemies overwhelmed the man who had preserved India against a combination of European and Asiatic foes. Dundas, though he differed on some essential points from Burke and Windham, yet concurred in opinion with them, that the charge contained criminal matter ; while Pitt scarcely took part in the debate. Not a word was uttered except by Scott in Hastings's defence ; and on the division, only thirty-seven voices acquitted him. Ninety-six supported the *motion*. The chancellor of the exchequer then rising, proposed that a day should be named for bringing up the report on those charges to which the house had agreed, and for discussing the question of impeachment. After a short conversation, the 2nd day of April was finally fixed on for the purpose.

*27th March.*—Mr. Hamilton, who had already taken so active a part in Hastings's favour, being of opinion that the time named for the agitation of this great subject was not sufficiently distant, endeavoured to interpose some delay. Equally

regardless of the effect which his speech might produce upon Pitt, or upon Burke, though connected by the closest ties of friendship with the former; in that imperious and dictatorial tone natural to him, he expressed his astonishment at the indecent precipitation which characterized their deliberations. Then alluding to a proposition thrown out some weeks earlier, for taking measures to secure Hastings's person and property as soon as the impeachment should be voted; "I speak at present," added he, "in terms of restrained indignation respecting it. If I had given way to my emotions on its first mention in this assembly, I could not have answered for my expressions. I will now only say, that I believe there are very few persons existing who do not wish Mr. Hastings fully to participate in the benefits and blessings of nature with all the rest of mankind." Professing at the same time a readiness to modify his *motion* in any manner which might appear to meet the general sentiment of the house, he contented himself with a protest against following up *the report*, by bringing forward the question of *impeachment* on one and the same evening. He was seconded by Mr. Yorke, then member for the county of Cambridge, now Earl of Hardwicke; a nobleman with whom I was much acquainted in early and middle life,

on the Continent, as well as in England. His father, Charles Yorke, who, overcome by the importunities of the present king, accepted the great seal, was second son of the celebrated Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. It is of Charles Yorke that *Junius* speaks, when, writing to the Duke of Grafton, on the 14th of February 1770, he says, "To what an abject condition have you laboured to reduce the best of princes, when the unhappy man who yields at last to such personal instance and solicitation as never can be fairly employed against a subject, feels himself degraded by his compliance, and is unable to survive the disgraceful honours which his gracious sovereign had compelled him to accept! He was a man of spirit; for he had a quick sense of shame, and death has redeemed his character."

The transaction to which *Junius* here refers is one of the most tragical which has taken place in our time. Mr. Yorke closed his existence in a manner strongly resembling the last scene of the lamented Sir Samuel Romilly. On his table lay the patent of his peerage (Baron Morden), and near it the great seal, which, when affixed, would have added the only formality necessary to its legal completion. But, as not a trace of any such impression could be discovered on the wax, and it appearing

therefore certain that the chancellor had not chosen to accept the recompence of his political desertion, the title never received effect. This catastrophe took place on the 20th of January 1770, three days subsequent to his audience of the king. While contemplating the fate of Mr. Yorke, overwhelmed under the legal dignity and the peerage, which constituted the supreme object of his ambition, we are reminded of Juvenal's

——“ Qui nimios optabat honores,  
Et nimias poscebat opes, numerosa parabat  
Excelsæ turris tabulata, unde altior esset  
Casus, et impulsæ præceps immane ruinæ !”

The present Earl of Hardwicke, though he does not inherit the abilities of his father or grandfather; nor perhaps equal in talents either of his uncles, the second Lord Hardwicke, and Lord Dover; yet possesses a solid and cultivated understanding, adorned by manners simple, unassuming, and conciliating, united to an irreproachable moral character. Sprung from a family ennobled by the law, like the Marquis Camden, they both governed Ireland in difficult times, and have both attained to the distinction of *the garter*; an honour which has been rarely conferred, except on the nobility of antient descent, during the course of George the Third's reign. After losing his father in

the manner related, he has had the misfortune likewise to survive his son, Lord Royston; who, at the age of twenty-four, was swallowed up in the waves of the Baltic, off the port of Memel, in 1808.—I return to the debate respecting Hastings's impeachment.

The chancellor of the exchequer rose as soon as Mr. Yorke concluded; and though he manifested the utmost personal deference towards his friend Hamilton, yet he did not less strenuously condemn the proposition of delay. Burke, thus supported by the minister, directed all the severity of his remarks against Hastings. "Let the house," exclaimed he, "recollect what species of criminal we have under our consideration! Let those who accuse us of precipitation, remember how many years we have been occupied with enquiries into Mr. Hastings's conduct! And has he not himself, in that extraordinary performance read by him at our bar, and which he denominated his *defence*, demanded dispatch, while he deprecated every instant of delay? The criminal charges in which this house has already concurred, are not simply high crimes and misdemeanors in the ordinary sense of the words: they are acts, at the bare mention of which our nature recoils with horror." Burke concluded by protesting that longer forbearance in rendering

the person and property of the accused individual amenable to public justice, would be on their parts an act of criminal neglect. Hamilton, now finding himself abandoned by his friends, and opposed by Hastings's prosecutors, requested permission to withdraw his *motion*; only adding that he was persuaded, when *the report* came before them, they would themselves become sensible of the impropriety of determining the question of *impeachment* upon the same evening.

*28th March.*—This conversation (as it might be more properly termed, than debate) was followed on the subsequent day by a discussion of a very different nature. Beaufoy undertook to move the repeal of *the Corporation and Test Acts*; two of the strongest protecting barriers erected by our ancestors against innovation, either in the church or in the government. His speech comprehended every argument which ingenuity or reason could suggest, clothed in language of no ordinary elegance and energy; tempered throughout by judgment as well as by moderation, and delivered with his characteristic oratorical cadence. From English history, from morals, from philosophy, no less than from sound policy and from religion, he drew, or attempted to draw, his inferences in favour of the proposition. I have indeed wit-

nessed few more luminous displays of intellect in parliament; and I speak with perfect impartiality, neither having voted with him on the occasion, nor being personally known to him except by a very slight acquaintance. As a striking illustration of the hardships imposed by *the Test Act*, Beaufoy cited the case of the celebrated and benevolent Mr. Howard, whom, he said, the proudest nation might be happy to call her own. "Yet even this excellent person," continued he, "renowned throughout Europe for his active philanthropy, having some few years ago taken on himself a troublesome and expensive civil employment, without the previous sacramental qualification enjoined by law, which his religious persuasion would not permit him to do, the penalties of the act are still impending over him. I fear that even now, on returning to his native country, amidst the plaudits of an admiring world, it may be in the power of any desperate informer, who is ready to take that road to wealth and to damnation which the legislature points out, to prosecute Mr. Howard to conviction; thereby exposing him to all the punishments inflicted on an outlaw, to the indelible dishonour of the British name." It must be admitted that such a case would exhibit the severest commentary on the laws. Sir Henry

Hoghton seconded Beaufoy's *motion* for a committee of the whole house, to consider of the best mode for redressing the grievance which formed the subject of complaint. He was by creation one of the oldest baronets, as he was by election one of the most antient members of parliament in England; a rigid presbyterian, of ample fortune, adorned with the mildest manners, and whose character, without stain of any kind, served highly to recommend the proposition.

But Lord North resisted it in a speech, which, though much more concise than Beaufoy's, made not a less deep impression on his hearers: an impression augmented by his personal appearance, deprived of sight, and led in by his son, Colonel North. Those who recollected him only about six years earlier, in the plenitude of ministerial power, seated on the treasury bench, and who contrasted it with his present change of place, and his blindness, surrounded by the companions of his political fall; might contemplate a striking monument of the slippery foundations on which ambition constructs its best-raised edifices. Far from coinciding in Beaufoy's principles or assumptions, he besought the house not to repeal *the Test Act*, as being the great bulwark of our constitution, to which we were eminently indebted for our



freedom and tranquillity. "With respect," added he, "to the indignity of which the dissenters complain, in not admitting them to offices unless they qualify by the act in question; has not the country legislatively enacted, that no king or queen shall sit on the throne of these realms who refuses to take *the Test Act*?" "What was the opinion of parliament in 1689, at the time of the revolution? That parliament was alive to the miseries which we had recently experienced, and to the dangers which we had escaped. They deliberately reviewed all the laws, and they repealed every one except *the Test Act*, which they regarded as merely a civil and political regulation, necessary for the security of the church and the preservation of the British constitution." Lord North illustrated these facts and reasonings by tracing the conduct of James the Second, when aiming equally at arbitrary power, and at the introduction of popery; to the attainment of both which objects *the Test Act* formed his principal or sole impediment. "It brought," continued he, "that ill-advised prince to the crisis of his fate. For, if he could once have procured its repeal, tyranny would have stolen silently on, till it had struck so deep a root as to have rendered all endeavours ineffectual for our emancipation." Shortly after pronoun-

cing this appeal to the good sense and constitutional loyalty of the house, indisposition compelled him to return home, without staying to vote on the question.

The chancellor of the exchequer, who fully coincided with him in opinion, did not omit to pay Lord North the highest compliments on the ability which he had displayed in discussing and elucidating a question of such national importance. They were, I believe, the first spontaneous recognitions to that nobleman's talents and principles which had fallen from the minister's lips since he came into office. Fox took the contrary side; remarking, that however he might of late have been charged with the odium of coalition, it would not be imputable to him on that evening. With great acuteness, he endeavoured to demonstrate that religion did not form a proper test for political institutions; sustaining his assertion by the authority of Locke, and of other eminent writers. Then addressing himself to the dissenters, he lavished high eulogiums on the motives which had regulated their public conduct in preceding periods of our history; exhorting them to persist in their applications to the legislature, which could not ultimately fail of success. "I have considered myself," added he, "as honoured in acting with them

on many occasions ; and if I thought there was any time in which they departed from constitutional principles, *I should refer that conduct to a very recent date.* But I am determined to let them know, that however *they* may occasionally lose sight of their principles of liberty, *I* never will lose sight of my principles of toleration." This pointed allusion to the part taken by the dissenters as a body, relative to the memorable *East India Bill*, did not escape Pitt's animadversion. After declaring that no person respected them as individuals more than he did, and admitting that in their corporate capacity the nation owed them obligations, for the disposition which they had evinced to resist the encroachments of arbitrary power ; he subjoined, "If *I* were to name the time in which I conceive that they have exhibited the best proof of their attachment to national freedom, I should fix upon the precise period in which it is asserted that they lost sight of their original principles." Neither Burke nor Sheridan took any part in this debate, and on the division, Beaufoy's motion was negatived by seventy-eight votes ; ninety-eight sustaining it, while the majority amounted to one hundred and seventy-six.

*2nd April.*—With the month of April recommenced the great business of the session. She-

ridan lending himself again to the animosity of Burke, undertook to open the charge against Hastings, relative to *presents*. The subject did not indeed afford him equal facilities of exciting either indignation or compassion, which he had derived from the sufferings of the Princesses of Oude: but it enabled him nevertheless to exhibit, under another form, his eloquent and seductive powers of oratory. Nor did he fail to enliven and to embellish the narrative of the governor-general's asserted acts of corruption, or of venality, by some of those descriptions, sketched with a master hand, and highly coloured, which Sheridan well knew how to compose in his closet. "In reviewing Mr. Hastings's line of action," observed he, "I have uniformly found it to originate from a wild, eccentric, ill-regulated mind. Now, haughty and lofty; now, mean and insidious. Generous, just, artful, open, by fits and starts. At times, deceitful; at others, decided. Changeable in every thing, except in corruption. There, and only there, systematic, methodical, immutable. His revenge, furious as a tempest, or a tornado. His corruption, a monsoon, a trade-wind, blowing regularly and constantly from one quarter."—In this portrait, where the very similes are drawn from appropriate Asiatic phenomena, and where truth was rendered

subservient to stage effect; — for the house of commons might justly be regarded by him as a theatre, not less than Drury-lane; — he principally studied to captivate and to enchain his hearers. No particle of the distempered, implacable animosity by which Burke was animated and impelled, really pervaded Sheridan's bosom. Wit, antithesis, metaphor, irony, played successively through his speeches. When describing the morality of the court of directors, pourtrayed in their correspondence with the governor-general, he said it might be condensed in these words. "*Forasmuch* as you have accepted presents, we highly *disapprove* your conduct: but, *inasmuch* as you have applied them to the credit of our account, we exceedingly *approve* your conduct." Even assuming that the observation contained as much truth as it did humour, yet Mr. Hastings neither being in the service of the crown, nor able to foresee that his enemies would bring him as a public culprit before parliament on his return to Europe, — was it just to impeach him for accommodating his conduct to the standard of morals recognized by his immediate employers? The court of directors, not Hastings, seem to have formed the proper objects of prosecution, if Sheridan's assertion had been founded in reality.

Major Scott opposed to Sheridan's elegant declamation a dry, clear detail of facts, calculated to extenuate, if not wholly to disprove, all his allegations. Unfortunately, as Scott's zeal and information were not in every instance accompanied with corresponding judgment, he exposed Hastings to a severe attack from a quarter where hitherto he had almost always found a defender. For, Scott having mentioned among the circumstances which proved the estimation in which the late governor-general's public conduct was held by ministers, that since his return home, at a dinner given him by the East India Directors, various members of the board of control were present, Lord Mulgrave rose under great apparent agitation. "I am anxious," exclaimed he, "to rescue Mr. Hastings from the *shabby* defence now set up for him. No man approves and applauds more than myself numerous parts of his administration while in Bengal. But is it sufficient to say, in reply to serious charges, that when he was entertained by his employers, as a mark of *their* grateful satisfaction, some members of the efficient Indian government dined in the same room?" No doubt, Scott acted imprudently in alluding to the circumstance; but there were persons who thought that Lord Mulgrave's anger was directed as much to conciliate the

minister, as it arose from feelings of indignation against Hastings's advocate. It was become evident that Pitt had determined to vote for the impeachment. Lord Mulgrave had very warmly opposed it in various stages. On the charge respecting Cheyt Sing, he had declared that, as an honest man, he could not coincide with the chancellor of the exchequer in the condemnation of Hastings. These differences of opinion might be productive of injurious personal consequences. The British peerage, which formed the great object of his ambition, the reward of his parliamentary service, lay in near prospect before him. In fact, he was sent to the upper house little more than three years afterwards, when the dissolution took place; and he had probably secured a promise of it at this time. How far the considerations here enumerated might sharpen his sense of the imprudence committed by Scott, must remain matter of conjecture. Mr. William Grenville concurred in sentiment with Lord Mulgrave. Both became peers in 1790.

A singularity attending this debate was, that neither Fox or Burke on one side, nor Pitt or Dundas on the other, took any part in it. One hundred and sixty-five persons found Hastings guilty, while only fifty-four acquitted him. A new discussion then commenced, respecting the order of proceeding proper to be adopted by

the house. The chancellor of the exchequer gave it as his opinion, that the most advisable course to pursue, would be to refer the charges to a committee, who might select out of them the criminal matter, and frame it into articles of impeachment. Then, upon those articles, when reported, he proposed to move the question of impeachment itself. Fox maintained a contrary doctrine. He said that the next step to be taken, after agreeing to the report on the table, would be to send a message to the house of lords, signifying that "the house of commons had resolved to impeach Mr. Hastings." Adding, that "they were preparing articles, and would send them up with all convenient dispatch." Each sustained his opinion by arguments drawn from reason, substantial justice, and above all, from precedents; beginning with the case of the Earl of Danby, under Charles the Second; and concluding with the trial of the Lord Chancellor Macclesfield, under George the First. Burke having patiently listened to the two disputants with more suavity than he ordinarily displayed, gave his advice in favour of the minister's mode of prosecution. Not, as he asserted, in compliance with his own judgment,—for he declared Fox's proposition to be the most constitutional,—but with the intent, if possible, of securing unanimity.

I freely confess, it appeared to me at the



time, and I still remain unaltered in my opinion, that Hastings's defence was altogether ill-advised and injudicious; exposing him to the very evils which he might have avoided by a different line of action. If, instead of pretending to an immaculate purity, which no man in his perilous and elevated position could invariably maintain during twelve or thirteen years, he had adopted another mode of justification, he never would have been impeached. When accused of mal-administration, if he had contrasted the instances adduced with his eminent recognized services to the state;—if he had early authorized and enjoined his agent so to act, he would infallibly have disarmed Burke; or at the worst, he would probably have secured Pitt. But ignorance, credulity, and presumption were his guides. Unacquainted with the nature of the ground, and relying on royal favour, while his own mind acquitted him of any dereliction of his public duties; he threw himself boldly, but, as the event proved, most imprudently, on the current of parliament. At first, it seemed to support him; but as he advanced, the stream became more shallow and rocky, till he was finally wrecked. His warmest admirers and adherents were even obliged, in voting for him, to cover themselves with the very robe which he had thrown aside as un-

worthy of his use. They acquitted him, not because they considered the specific accusation brought forward to be without foundation in every particular instance ; but because, balancing his faults, or his acts of severity, against his resplendent public merits, they thought that he deserved honours and rewards, instead of punishment. At least, such was the principle on which *I* acted throughout the whole prosecution. So, as I know, did many others. Burke profited of Hastings's error, to attack him. Pitt availed himself of it, to abandon him. Dundas, who took a less prominent part, calmly beheld the only individual who could emulate the place which he himself filled at the East India Board, plunge into an ocean of embarrassments. It is true that he was ultimately acquitted. But, how feeble a reparation did his acquittal constitute for years of accusation, attendance, and vexation, exposed to the eloquent invectives of Burke, Fox, and Sheridan ! I repeat, Hastings became the victim, not of his crimes, or of his oppressions committed in the East. It was his own imprudence, and want of able counsellors, that brought him into Westminster Hall.

*3rd April.*—When the house met for the purpose of appointing a committee to draw up articles of impeachment, Burke inveighed against

any attempt to alledge Mr. Hastings's merits, as a *set-off* against direct, criminal, personal charges. Where general criminality was imputed, he admitted that it might be fair to plead general services; but, in a case where specific articles of accusation had been exhibited, it became the duty of parliament to put the party accused upon his trial, without regard to any merits that he might plead, or even possess. Mr. Hastings, he observed, had declared his disdain of any benefit that might result from bringing forward his public services, either as an extenuation, or as a justification, of his conduct. Major Scott rising immediately, avowed that he never had for an instant, at any period of the prosecution, entertained an idea of pleading Mr. Hastings's merits, *as a set-off against delinquencies*. "I have uniformly opposed all the charges," continued he, "because I conscientiously believe that the late governor-general merited thanks and recompences for those very acts which here have been made grounds of impeachment." In order to corroborate this declaration, which, he said, was equally the sentiment of Hastings, Scott read, by permission of the assembly, a paper, in which he thus expressed himself on the point: "If it shall be resolved that there is *ground* for impeaching me, I presume the *resolution* of impeachment

ought to follow of course ; as the only mode of satisfying the national justice, on the supposition of my guilt ; or to clear my character, in the alternative of my innocence." Hastings concluded by requesting those members who had not thought him culpable, yet, if the house should resolve on the *report*, to charge him with crimes and misdemeanors ; in that event to unite with his prosecutors, for the purpose of bringing him to legal trial.

The *resolutions* being severally read, and the question put upon each, not a word was uttered in opposition to them. Burke then moved the appointment of a committee to prepare articles of impeachment. Their names, at the head of which list appeared his own, were selected by himself, to the number of twenty. I have had occasion to mention the far greater part of them in the course of these memoirs. One only was rejected on a division ; I mean, Francis, whose implacable hostility to Hastings rendered him, in the judgment of a large majority, unfit to fill the office of a manager on the approaching trial. He seemed, indeed, to display a most indecorous and malignant spirit of enmity, in wishing to assume so prominent a part on the prosecution of a man with whom, as a member of the supreme council, he had differed in opinion upon almost every public measure,

and by whom he had been wounded in a duel. Yet Francis complained of his exclusion, as the result of malicious insinuations industriously circulated by his enemies. Only eight individuals of the twenty survive at the time when I am now writing, in April 1819; among whom are the four Earls, of Rosslyn, Chichester, Lauderdale, and Grey, together with Lord St. John of Bletsoe. George Augustus North, Lord North's eldest son, filled a place in the committee, not from respect to his talents or eloquence, but as a testimony of his father's approval of, and co-operation in, the impeachment. Welbore Ellis and General Burgoyne rather lent their names, than afforded any efficient aid, to the cause. So did Frederic Montagu, whose correct information on all matters of parliamentary form or order, when added to his high character for integrity, served to grace the catalogue. Invitations were given by Burke, to the chancellor of the exchequer, and to Dundas, soliciting each of them to become members of the committee; but, after joining Hastings's enemies to collect the combustible materials, they judiciously left to others the task of commencing the conflagration.

*4th—16th April.*—During the period of the parliamentary recess at Easter, great changes took place in the councils of France; Vergennes's death

being followed, after a short interval of time, by Calonne's dismissal. Whatever might be the defects of the controller-general's private or public character, (and I readily admit that they were numerous;) he unquestionably fell a victim to his enlightened but imprudent propositions for the amelioration of the finances. Without first securing a majority in the assembly of the "notables," he brought forward a measure, pregnant indeed with national benefit, but, most repugnant to the pride and egotism, no less than it would have been severe in its operation on the property, of the privileged orders. His proposition for imposing a territorial impost, analogous to our land-tax, to be levied without distinction from every class of subjects, must have poured into the royal treasury a sum of more than four millions sterling annual revenue. The plan was worthy of Colbert, and if it had been realized, would have extricated the sovereign, sustained the throne, and prevented, or at least mitigated, revolution. Unfortunately, the nobility, the clergy, and the magistracy or parliaments, blind to their own real interests, and ripe for the destruction which impended over them, refused to sacrifice a part of their possessions, in order to preserve the remainder. The projected tax, which would have forced the peers,

and even the princes of the blood, to contribute in the same proportion with the mechanic or the peasant, met with general opposition. Calonne, unable to surmount so formidable a combination, found it necessary to resign, overwhelmed by his own unpopularity, while meditating to extricate France from financial embarrassment.

A circumstance, trifling in itself, which took place about this time, serves nevertheless forcibly to demonstrate the aversion felt towards him by the inhabitants of the capital, as well as their characteristic levity. The *tester* of Calonne's bed having fallen upon him during the night, together with a portion of the ceiling of the room, he narrowly escaped suffocation. All Paris, when the fact became known, exclaimed, "*Juste Ciel!*" The *tester* of a bed is denominated in French, *le ciel du lit*. After undergoing some marks of royal displeasure, he was permitted to withdraw into England. With *him* may be said to have commenced the emigration which soon became so general; and from his fall we may date the beginning of the revolution, though the Bastille was not attacked and taken till more than two years after Calonne's dismissal. Lomenie de Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse, a prelate whose abilities were at that time highly estimated, succeeded to the

vacant place at the head of the finances. The Duke of Dorset, writing to me from Paris on the 24th of May 1787, says, "The Archbishop of Toulouse is said to be a clever man; but I believe him to be very much over-rated." Time soon confirmed the ambassador's opinion. Even the appointment of an ecclesiastic to so eminent a post, at such a moment, was by no means calculated to calm the national agitation, or to sustain the tottering foundations of the monarchy.

*20th April.*—But the attention of parliament, and of all England, was suddenly diverted at this time into a new channel, by the debts of the Prince of Wales; which, within the space of less than four years, were become intolerably oppressive to himself. All application to the sovereign for assistance being found ineffectual, it was determined by his secret advisers, at whose head presided Lord Loughborough, Fox, and Sheridan, to throw him at once on the generosity of the house of commons. Alderman Newnham, who, in the course of the preceding session, when the subject of his royal highness's pecuniary embarrassments was agitated, had expressed his conviction that the income of the heir-apparent could not be found adequate to the support of his dignity, was again selected on the present occasion. He pos-



sessed neither eloquence, nor public consideration, that seemed to qualify him for so delicate an office ; but, as one of the representatives for the city of London, he might be supposed to speak the sentiments of his constituents. Newnham, addressing himself across the table to the chancellor of the exchequer, requested to be informed whether it was the intention of ministers to bring forward any proposition for rescuing the Prince of Wales from his very distressed situation. He added, that the question thus asked did not originate in personal curiosity ; as, according to the nature of the answer returned, he might find it expedient to ground a parliamentary proceeding. Pitt, thus interrogated, replied very laconically, that it not being his duty to open such a subject, except by command of his majesty, it was only necessary for him to say that he had received no such directions. The alderman then gave notice, that on the 4th of the ensuing month, he would propose to the consideration of the house a *motion* relative to the Prince of Wales. Here terminated the conversation.

24th April.—Public curiosity being universally excited by the expected agitation of a question, in which the king and his eldest son must form the two opposite parties ; and which might in its progress give rise to the most

painful disclosures ; Pitt endeavoured, about four days later, either wholly to avert it ; or, if that should be found impracticable, at least to ascertain the nature of the intended *motion*. Rising for the purpose, after alluding to the delicacy of the subject itself, he expressed a wish to know whether the honourable magistrate still persisted in forcing it forward on the attention of the house. “ If he retained his determination,” the minister added, “ at least its scope and tendency ought to be stated.” Newnham replied that *he* did not *force forward* a discussion, which was propelled by its own weight : that he had not yet decided on the precise form in which he should vest his proposition ; but that its object would be to rescue the Prince of Wales from his actual pecuniary difficulties. The minister sarcastically observing, that it was singular to have given notice of a *motion*, without previously determining what it should be ; especially as it regarded a matter of such gravity and novelty ; Fox came forward to Newnham’s assistance. Having concurred in the *latter* part of Pitt’s observation, Fox subjoined his hopes, that on account of the necessity which would arise for investigating the causes of his royal highness’s distress, the business itself might be anticipated, and some act performed which must supersede the proposed

*motion*. "I admit," answered the chancellor of the exchequer, "the necessity of investigation; and precisely for that reason, combined with my profound respect for the illustrious family concerned in it, I would, if possible, prevent discussion. The information which I possess on the point, renders me peculiarly desirous of avoiding it; but, if a determination should be manifested to bring it before this assembly, I shall, however distressing it may be to myself as an individual, discharge my public duty by entering fully into the subject."

27th April.—These reciprocal menaces soon led to more determined indications of hostility. Newnham having announced that his intention was "to move an address to the throne, entreating his majesty to enquire into the prince's embarrassed situation, and to rescue him from it;" Rolle, who, though he furnished in his own person matter for political and poetic ridicule, yet represented a great county; and who, however coarse in his language he might be, wanted not intelligence or firmness in the discharge of his parliamentary duties; instantly expressed his disapprobation of the proposed *motion*. "It is," continued he, "a proposition which tends immediately to affect our constitution, *both in church and state*. If therefore it should ever be brought forward,

I will, as soon as the honourable magistrate sits down, move *the previous question*;—for I am decidedly of opinion that it ought not to be discussed within these walls.” Fox being absent on that evening, (not, as he afterwards declared, premeditatedly, with a view of avoiding the mention of such a topic; but because he was unacquainted with the intention to agitate it;)—Sheridan took on himself to justify the appeal to parliament. “A county member,” exclaimed he, “stands forward, and calls on the country gentlemen to aid him in opposing a discussion which may affect our constitution *in church and state*. The subject is doubtless in itself momentous; but dark insinuations have been thrown out, in order to magnify its importance. They have even been used as arguments to deter his royal highness’s friends from introducing any measure likely to produce an enquiry into his conduct, under the penalty of disclosing alarming facts.—I am however confident, and I speak from authority, when I assert that he wishes every part of his conduct to be laid open, without ambiguity or concealment. Such is the unequivocal reply which the illustrious personage would himself give, as a peer of parliament, if this subject should ever be agitated in another assembly.”

Not in the least degree intimidated by Sheridan's speech, Rolle replied that no man present felt more loyalty towards his sovereign, or towards the heir-apparent, than himself. "Nevertheless," added he, "if a *motion* is proposed, which I hold to be improper, I shall act as becomes an independent country gentleman. *I expect nothing from his majesty, nor from his successor.* I will therefore fulfil my duty, by opposing a proposition which may produce serious *differences* between the father and the son." The sincerity of this concise and lofty declaration of disinterestedness, worthy of *Andrew Marvel*, or of *Shippen*, must yet be liable to some sort of doubt; since, only nine years afterwards, the member for Devon kissed hands at St. James's, on being raised by Pitt to the British peerage. And it is difficult to suppose, that even at the time when he professed so much indifference to the honours which emanate from the throne, he had not in view to obtain a seat in the upper house. Various persons now interposed, to deprecate the further discussion of so momentous a question. Among them Powis rose, who, however elevated might be his motives, nourished in his bosom a systematic ambition, not incompatible with an ardent desire of promoting the public welfare. In urgent terms he implored of

Newnham not to prosecute his threatened intention ; adding, that he ought to entreat permission to withdraw his notice. But Sheridan instantly appealed to the chancellor of the exchequer, whether, by adopting such a course, the prince would not seem to concede to terror, what he had refused to argument. Under these circumstances, the minister, after again expostulating both with Newnham, and with Sheridan, on the impropriety of persisting to bring forward a proposition big with public mischief ; finding all his efforts for preventing it fruitless, contented himself with declaring, that the particulars to which he had alluded during a former debate, as necessary to be stated by him to the house, related solely to a correspondence that had taken place respecting the pecuniary embarrassments of the prince, and had no reference to any *extraneous facts*.

30th April.—Fox, who, as I have already observed, had not been present at this debate, attended in his place when the subject was resumed, and performed the principal part ; speaking in the name, and by the immediate authority of the heir-apparent. Mrs. Fitzherbert formed, in fact, the prominent object of enquiry, though she was not brought to the bar, and personally interrogated, as we have

beheld another female treated in 1809. Fox having expatiated on the hardship of the Prince of Wales's situation, and declared his royal highness's readiness to state every particular of the debts which he had incurred, next adverted to Rolle's allusion. Without naming any individual, he stigmatized the report itself as "a low malicious calumny, destitute of all foundation, impossible ever to have happened, and propagated with the sole view of depreciating the prince's character in the estimation of the country." Rolle readily admitted its *legal* impossibility, but he maintained that there were modes in which it might have taken place. He added, that the matter had been discussed in newspapers, all over the kingdom, impressing with deep concern every individual who venerated the British constitution. Fox replying, that he denied it in point of *fact*, as well as of *law*, the thing never having been done in any way; Rolle demanded, "Whether he spoke from direct authority?" To this question Fox answered decidedly in the affirmative; and here the dialogue terminated. Neither the chancellor of the exchequer, nor any other member present, took part in it; silence pervading the house, which, as well as the gallery, was crowded to the utmost degree. Mrs. Fitzherbert being now disclaimed as the wife of the Prince of Wales, in the most formal terms, by a per-

son who came expressly commissioned for the purpose, on behalf of the personage principally interested, and Rolle making no reply, a sort of pause ensued; the debate, as far as it regarded the supposed matrimonial union or contract in question, seeming to be at an end.

Such would probably have been the fact ;—for Fox, satisfied with exposing the falsity of the imputation, never once opened his lips during the remainder of the discussion. But Sheridan, who always manifested an aversion towards Rolle, observed that, after the explicit answer given on the present occasion, it would be most unhandsome in the member for Devon not to express his satisfaction. Finding nevertheless that no disposition was manifested to comply with his demand ; Rolle simply remarking, that he had certainly received an answer, and that the house must form their own opinion of its propriety ; Sheridan returned with more personality to the charge. “ Such a line of conduct,” he said, “ was neither candid, nor manly ; and the house ought therefore to resolve it seditious, as well as disloyal, to propagate reports injurious to the character of the Prince of Wales.” Rolle however refused to concede, or to declare any conviction on the subject. “ I did not invent these reports,” answered he, “ but I heard them, and they made an impression on my mind. In order to ascertain how



far they had any foundation, I put the question; and in so doing, I am convinced that I have not acted in an unparliamentary manner." The chancellor of the exchequer, who during the course of Rolle's interrogatory to Fox had not interposed, now rose; and with great animation arraigned Sheridan's proceeding, as the most unqualified attack which he had ever witnessed on the freedom of debate. "Those," added Pitt, "who exhibit such warmth on the present occasion, ought rather to acknowledge their obligation to the individual who has suggested a question which produced so explicit a declaration on this interesting subject:—a declaration which *must* give complete satisfaction, not only to him, but to the whole house."

Rolle's tenacity in withholding his assent to the satisfactory nature of Fox's answer, was equally displayed by Sheridan, on Pitt's attempt to force from him the avowal. With uncommon ingenuity he endeavoured to demonstrate, that Rolle having received an explicit denial of his insinuation, was bound either to admit his error, or to adopt measures for discovering the truth. "It would," continued he, "be aggravating the malicious falsehood circulated, to assert that the Prince of Wales had authorized a false denial of the fact. Even the minister himself is obliged to *assume* that the honourable

member *must be satisfied*, as he has not had sufficient candour to make the acknowledgment." Thus pressed, Rolle once more rose, and after observing that his affection for the heir-apparent dictated the question put by him, he added, "The honourable gentleman has not heard me say I am *unsatisfied*." Grey vainly endeavoured by a repetition of Sheridan's arguments, couched in still more intemperate language, to elicit from Rolle a less equivocal recognition. But Pitt, indignant at the expressions used by Grey, repelled his attempt with great warmth. While the chancellor of the exchequer disclaimed every idea of menace, he persisted to declare that all those to whom the harmony and the happiness of the royal family were dear, ought to join with him in deprecating the threatened discussion; or, if it could not be prevented, at least to give it the most decided opposition. "No possible necessity," concluded he, "can be pleaded for recurring to this assembly on a subject which in propriety, as well as in decency, ought to originate with the crown; since I know that *there exists no want of becoming readiness in another quarter, to do every thing which ought to be done in the business*." With this declaration, which seemed, if it was improved, to open a door for mutual concession, the debate closed; each party professing a determined intention of

trying the issue, and both sides anticipating a favourable result.

*May.*—But a variety of considerations happily conduced to prevent a collision apparently so imminent, and which would have been subject of just regret if it had taken place. The question at issue regarding the royal family exclusively, could not be contemplated in the light of a common ministerial measure; and many individuals who usually supported government, would probably have voted on the contrary side. Fox's formal and direct disavowal of Mrs. Fitzherbert's marriage operated to conciliate others; who, when no longer indisposed towards the prince, on account of this supposed infraction of the laws, might incline to encrease his income, and even to liquidate his debts. There were not wanting persons who thought his annual allowance too scanty for the heir to the British throne. Conscientious men considered the king's conduct scarcely justifiable, in appropriating to his own use the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall, during the minority of his son, and refusing to render any account of their expenditure after he became of age. His majesty asserted, indeed, that they had been expended on the prince's education; but it was answered, that provision had been made for that national object, which was included in the civil list. A statesman, especially if he was a minister, might

probably have decided in favour of the sovereign. I believe that a rigid moralist would nevertheless have determined on the other side. Pitt's own parliamentary experience had shown him, that he could not always calculate on a majority. He had been compelled to abandon *the Westminster scrutiny*, and to desist from prosecuting the Duke of Richmond's *plan of fortifications*. The grace and affability of the prince, when combined with the festivities of Carlton-house; contrasted too as they were with the seclusion of George the Third's mode of life; contributed to attract followers. These facts, which could not escape either Pitt's or Dundas's attention, were enforced, and placed before them in the strongest point of view, by the Duchess of Gordon. Few women have performed a more conspicuous part, or occupied a higher place than herself, on the public theatre of fashion, politics, and dissipation, between the period of which I am writing, and the close of Pitt's first administration; a term of about fourteen-years. I shall speak of her with great impartiality, from long personal acquaintance. She was one of the three daughters of Sir William Maxwell of Monteith, a Scotch baronet; and the song of "Jenny of Monteith," which I have heard the present Duke of Gordon sing, was composed to celebrate her charms.

In *my* estimate of female attractions, she

always wanted one essential component part of beauty. Neither in her person, manners, or mind, was there any feminine expression. She might have aptly represented the Juno of Homer; but not Horace's "O, quæ beatam Diva tenes Cyprum!" Her features, however noble, pleasing, and regular, always animated, constantly in play, never deficient in vivacity or intelligence, yet displayed no timidity. They were sometimes overclouded by occasional frowns of anger or vexation, much more frequently lighted up with smiles. Her conversation bore a very strong analogy to her intellectual formation. Exempted by her sex, rank, and beauty, from those restraints imposed on woman by the generally recognized usages of society, the Duchess of Gordon frequently dispensed with their observance. Unlike the Duchess of Devonshire, who, with the tumult of elections, faro, and party triumphs, could mix love, poetry, and a passion for the fine arts; the Scottish duchess reserved all the energies of her character for ministerial purposes. Desirous of participating in the blessings which the treasury alone can dispense, and of enrolling the name of Gordon, with those of Pitt and of Dundas; if not in the rolls of fame, at least in the substantial list of court favour and benefaction; the administration did not possess a

more active or determined partizan. Her discernment enabled her to perceive that Fox, whatever dignities or employments might be reserved for him by fortune under the reign of George the Fourth, would probably remain excluded from power so long as the sceptre remained in the possession of George the Third. This principle or conviction seemed never to be absent from her mind.

Her conjugal duties pressed on her heart with less force, than did her maternal solitudes. In her daughters centered principally her ambitious cares. For their elevation, no sacrifices appeared to her to be too great, no exertions too laborious, no renunciations too severe. It would indeed be vain to seek for any other instance in our history, of a woman who has allied three of her five daughters in marriage to English dukes, and the fourth to a marquis. Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, so powerful under the last queen of the Stuart race, and who had likewise five daughters, obtained for them only two dukes and three earls in marriage. Yet *they* were the children of the illustrious John Churchill, and on *them* was respectively settled, by act of parliament, the dukedom, and Blenheim. The ladies in question inherited nothing, not even their mother's personal beauty; or at least, only in a

diminished degree. To that mother, and to her solely, they owed their great matrimonial alliances. The Dukes of Richmond, and of Manchester ; banished under the name of governors, the first, to the snowy banks of the St. Laurence, and the other, to the oppressive climate of Jamaica ; are both paying, at this hour, the penalty of those imprudent, if not unfortunate matches. Georgiana, youngest of the five, whom the duchess carried over to Paris in 1802, and whose hand she had destined for Eugene Beauharnois, in the subsequent year became Duchess of Bedford. Bonaparte, then first consul, and already anticipating an imperial crown, meditated a higher alliance for Eugene than the family of Gordon could offer, however antient or illustrious may be its rank in the Scottish peerage ; and he expressed his decided disapprobation of any such meditated union. Three years later, having by the plenitude of his usurped power saluted the Duke of Bavaria as a king, he exacted the sacrifice of the new sovereign's eldest daughter, for Josephine's son, nominated viceroy of Italy.

As early as the year 1787, Dundas had attained a commanding influence, which no other individual ever acquired over Pitt's mind. With the members of the cabinet Pitt maintained only a political union : Dundas was his compa-

nion, with whom he passed, not merely his convivial hours, but to whom he confided his cares and embarrassments. Dundas possessed a villa near London, at Wimbledon, where he was accustomed to repair after debates, for the purpose of sleeping out of town. Pitt, on quitting the treasury bench, used to throw himself into Dundas's post-chaise, and to accompany him. At whatever hour they arrived, they sate down to supper; never failed to drink each his bottle; and the minister found his sleep more sound, as well as more refreshing, at Wimbledon, than in Downing-street. However violent might have been the previous agitation of his mind, yet in a very few minutes after he laid his head on the pillow, he never failed to sink into profound repose. So difficult, indeed, was it to awaken him, that his valet usually shook him before he could be roused from sleep. One of his private secretaries used to affirm that no intelligence, however distressing, had power sufficient to break his rest. On that account, he never locked or bolted the door of his bed-chamber. I recollect a circumstance which took place, several years subsequent to this time;—it happened in 1796;—strongly corroborative of the above facts. Pitt having been much disturbed by a variety of painful political occurrences, drove out to pass the night with Dundas at Wimbledon.



After supper, the minister withdrew to his chamber, having given his servant directions to call him at seven, on the ensuing morning. No sooner had he retired, than Dundas, conscious how much his mind stood in need of repose, repaired to his apartment, locked the door, and put the key in his pocket; at the same time enjoining the valet on no consideration to disturb his master, but to allow him to sleep as long as nature required. It is a truth that Pitt neither awoke, nor called any person, till half-past four in the afternoon of the following day; when Dundas entering his room together with his servant, found him still in so deep a sleep, that it became necessary to shake, in order to awaken him. He had slept uninterruptedly during more than sixteen hours.

I have already remarked elsewhere, that Dundas, beneath the appearance of unguarded, open manners, knew how to mature, and when necessary, how to conceal, the most solid projects of ambition. Managing Scotland, while he controlled India, and looking forward to the British peerage as his certain reward, he kept his eye fixed invariably on Pitt. With consummate ability he adapted his conduct, as well as his conversation, to the peculiar structure of that minister's mind, on which adulation would only have produced effects injurious to his own

plans. Dundas guided Pitt on many points, and influenced him upon almost every measure; but he effected it by never dictating upon any matter. When discussing public business, he commonly affected to embrace ideas contrary to the opinion which he knew or believed Pitt to have formed upon the subject. After contesting the chancellor of the exchequer's arguments, Dundas usually concluded by adopting his sentiments, as if from real conviction. This ingenious species of flattery proved irresistible, under the control of judgment. The Duchess of Gordon, who lived in habits of great intimacy with them both, entertained about the same time the project of marrying her eldest daughter to the first minister. Lady Charlotte Lennox was then about eighteen years of age; and though not a Hebe, yet her youth, her high birth, and her accomplishments, might, not improbably, as her mother thought, effect his conquest. In fact, Pitt, however little constitutionally inclined to the passion of love, yet manifested some partiality towards her, and showed her many attentions.

The duchess, desirous of improving so favourable a commencement, used to drive to Wimbledon, accompanied by Lady Charlotte, at times when she knew that Pitt was there. But Dundas, than whom few men were more

clear-sighted ; and who by no means wished his friend to form a matrimonial connexion, which must have given the duchess a sort of maternal ascendant over him ; determined to counteract her design. For that purpose, he could devise no expedient more efficacious, than affecting a disposition to lay his own person and fortune at Lady Charlotte's feet. He was then a widower, having been divorced from his first wife. Pitt, who never had displayed more than a slight inclination towards the lady, ceased his assiduities ; and Dundas's object being answered, his pretensions, which never were clearly pronounced, expired without producing any ostensible effect. Singular, or doubtful as these facts may appear, I have good reason for believing them to be founded in truth. They came from high authority. Two years later, the Duchess of Gordon succeeded in procuring for her the hand of Colonel Lenox, since become Duke of Richmond.

*1st—4th May.*—The concluding words of the minister's speech on the 30th of April, sufficiently indicated that at St. James's there existed a disposition to accommodate matters, without making disclosures in the house of commons, equally painful to the king, and to the prince. It only required a friendly interposition to animate this inclination. The Duch-

ess of Gordon undertook the office. She passed a part of almost every evening in society with the heir-apparent, whom she was accustomed in conversation to treat with the utmost freedom, even upon points of great delicacy. Her exhortations and remonstrances to ministers produced the desired effect. His majesty having approved of the experiment, Dundas was selected for carrying it into execution. The facility of his careless, open manner, so different from Pitt's serious, stiff, constrained address, rendered him peculiarly proper for the mission. A respectful intimation being conveyed to his royal highness, requesting permission on the part of Dundas to attend him at Carlton-house, an interview took place between them on Wednesday, the 2nd of May. I could recount some of its most curious particulars, as they were related by the prince himself to one of my intimate friends, who communicated them to me. But, though many years may possibly elapse before these memoirs will be laid before the public, yet I shall content myself with stating that Dundas experienced the most gracious reception. After ascertaining from the prince's own lips the extent of his pecuniary incumbrances, which amounted to full two hundred thousand pounds, Dundas gave him an assurance that prompt, as well as liberal assistance,

should be extended to him. This amicable conference was subsequently moistened with no ordinary quantity of wine; and the engagement which had been contracted fasting, received a most energetic ratification on the part of the treasurer of the navy, after they had drunk very freely together. There did not indeed exist among the members of administration an individual composed of more malleable materials than Dundas. The ground being now prepared, and the preliminaries adjusted, on the following day, Thursday, Pitt was admitted to an audience at Carlton-house. Every article of the accommodation was finally concluded, before the separation of the prince and the chancellor of the exchequer.

*4th May.*—Intelligence of this favourable result not having been generally circulated before the house of commons met, curiosity attracted an unusual concourse of members; when Newnham, in few words, informed them, that the *motion* which he had announced was *now* no longer necessary, and therefore he should decline bringing it forward. Pitt, offended at the sarcastic insinuation conveyed in the monosyllable *now*, after expressing his satisfaction that the measure was admitted to be no longer necessary, subjoined, “ I cannot help declaring, that as I always considered it to be unnecessary,

so I do not *now* perceive it to be more so, than at the time when the notice was given. I am, however, happy to find that we are at last of the same opinion on the subject." So pointed an animadversion called up Fox, who, while he deprecated any expression which might disturb the desirable unanimity, nevertheless added, "I remain *now* as much convinced that the motion *was* necessary, as I am persuaded at this moment of its being *no longer* necessary." The chancellor of the exchequer having justified the king's conduct throughout every part of the transaction, as "uniform and consistent, departing in no one instance from the principles which always directed him;" Fox made a similar declaration or protest on the part of the prince.

*9th May.*—The proceedings in the prosecution of Hastings, which seemed to have been suspended during near three weeks, while the application of the Prince of Wales to parliament occupied the public mind; were resumed and terminated, as far as they related to the house of commons, at this time. A debate of great interest took place on the second reading of the articles of impeachment. Lord Hood, with the feelings of a man to whom the command of fleets had been delegated under circumstances of the greatest personal respon-

sibility, made a short and plain appeal in favour of an individual, who, whatever errors he might have committed, had unquestionably rescued that valuable portion of the empire entrusted to his care from almost inevitable subversion. Wilkes, though during the two or three last sessions he had rarely taken any active part, and though he already began to feel the infirmities of approaching age, came forward on this occasion. The same unconquered spirit, wit, and classic fire, which he displayed on the 30th of April 1763, when brought before the Earls of Egremont and Halifax, by virtue of a *general warrant*, pervaded every sentence that he uttered. But his articulation, which never had been perfectly distinct even in youth, grew annually more embarrassed from the inroads of time on his organs of speech. After stating that, however he might have been dazzled with the splendor of eloquence, or charmed by appeals to the passions, on the part of Hastings's accusers, he remained wholly unconvinced by their arguments; "I have heard him," continued Wilkes, "more than once compared to *Verres*. But the house ought to recollect that when the governor of Sicily was accused before the Roman senate, scarcely an inhabitant of that island could be found who did not exhibit complaints against him.

In the instance before us, though the prosecution, or rather, the persecution of Mr. Hastings has been already nearly three years in progress, yet not a single charge or imputation on his conduct has been transmitted from India." — "When we consider," resumed he, "that while the empire was mouldering away elsewhere, Mr. Hastings, by his exertions, preserved unimpaired our possessions in the East; I am covered with astonishment, that *a faction in this assembly* should have been able to carry on the proceedings to the present point. I trust, for the honour of the nation, it will be terminated and finally extinguished by a very considerable majority, before we adjourn, this night." Wilkes concluded by moving "that the report should be read a second time on that day three months."

Ilay Campbell, then lord advocate of Scotland, with great legal ability reviewed the whole series of Hastings's administration, pronouncing his exculpation or acquittal upon every point. But the individual who excited the strongest sensation, was Courtenay. Eccentric, fearless, sarcastic, highly informed, always present to himself, dealing his blows on every side, regardless on whom they fell; but, a devoted adherent of Fox; Courtenay began by an ironical compliment to Lord Hood,



“whom,” he said, “no man could contemplate without reverence, when he reflected how much his country owed him for having been a *spectator* of Lord Rodney’s glorious victory of the 12th of April 1782.” Loud cries of Order! from the ministerial benches here interrupting him; Courtenay, without betraying the slightest agitation or discomposure, calmly maintained, that his remark being complimentary to the noble lord, on the circumstance of his having *chanced to be present* when Admiral Rodney defeated De Grasse, no member had any right to accuse him as disorderly on the present occasion. Then turning towards Wilkes, who sate next to him, “The worthy alderman,” continued he, “possesses more sense than to feel anger, when I mean him a compliment; as I do, when I assert that his country owes him great obligations, for having, at one period of his life, diffused a spirit of liberty throughout the general mass of the people, unexampled,—except, indeed, in the times of Jack Cade, and Wat Tyler.” The cry of Order! that had been so violent only a minute before, was lost in the universal burst of laughter which followed this observation. “The honourable magistrate,” said Courtenay, “has defended Mr. Hastings’s treatment of the *Begums*, by asserting that those princesses were

engaged in rebellion. Surely he must have looked upon the transaction *obliquely*, or he never could have formed so erroneous an idea. Two old women in rebellion against the governor-general! impossible. Nor would the worthy alderman have made an "Essay on Woman," in the manner that Mr. Hastings did. The house well knows, he would not."

No person rising to interrupt him, though the humour of this last observation was lost in its superior indecency, Courtenay next attacked the lord advocate. Having compared Hastings to the execrated Colonel Kirk, so well known under the reign of James the Second; "I have heard," continued he, "parallels drawn in the course of preceding debates, between the late governor-general, and various persons illustrious for their exploits. Verres, Alexander, Scipio, and Epaminondas, have been successively named. I shall look to modern ages for my comparison. Ferdinand Cortez is my model. He being sent out to South America, for the purpose of instructing, *murdering*, and baptizing the uninformed Indians, marked his footsteps with blood and cruelty. His conduct exciting abhorrence, an enquiry was at length instituted, with a view of bringing him to justice. But Cortez, aware of his danger, took care to transmit some jewels to his sovereign.

Not, I believe, a *bulse*; for that is an oriental term; but a present of precious stones, which produced an equal effect on the Spanish monarch's mind, all mouths rehearsing the praises of Ferdinand Cortez." Such were the leading points of Courtenay's speech;—a speech which, as far as my parliamentary experience warrants me in asserting, stands alone in the annals of the house of commons; exhibiting a violation of every form or principle which have always been held sacred within those walls. The insult offered to Lord Hood at its commencement, became eclipsed in the studied indecorum of the allusions that followed, reflecting on the personal infirmities, or on the licentious productions, of the member for Middlesex. His invectives against Hastings, however violent, might seem to derive some justification, from the examples held out by Burke, Sheridan, and Francis. But the insinuation levelled at the king, with which Courtenay concluded, and the mention of the *bulse*, unquestionably demanded the interference of the chair.

The chastisement which he did not receive either from the Speaker, or from the general indignation of the assembly, was nevertheless inflicted on him by one of its members, Alderman Townsend. He had succeeded to Dunning's vacant seat, the Marquis of Lansdown

bringing him into parliament, for the borough of Calne; and though he seldom mingled in debate, he manifested, whenever he spoke, a manly mind, great facility of expression, strong sense, combined with upright principles of action. "I do not rise," exclaimed he, "to retail jokes; and still less do I intrude myself for the purpose of using terms so indecent, that they ought not to be tolerated in any place where regard is paid to decorum. But I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment that you, Mr. Speaker, should have allowed a member of this house to continue unchecked, and not have informed him that such language is most unbecoming." Then advertng to the proceedings against Hastings, "In the early stages of the present impeachment," continued he, "I pointed out the absurdity of our carrying articles to the bar of the other house, which would be thrown back in our faces; as being unsupported by any sort of proof, resting merely on declamation, and incapable of being established by evidence. I have patiently attended the series of charges, but have not heard one of them satisfactorily proved. If, therefore, we proceed any further, we must inevitably fail, and the disgrace which we mean for Mr. Hastings will revert upon ourselves. Appeals have been made to our honour, as well as to our justice.

But, what *honour* is gained by hunting down an individual who has deserved the thanks of his country for the most signal services? And if a sense of *justice* impels us, why is not restitution ordered of the money taken by Mr. Hastings, and applied by him to the pressing wants of the East India Company?" Having applauded the governor-general for his meritorious exertions in saving India, though by the sacrifice of rigid legal forms in various instances; "I recollect," added he, "the time when the present chancellor of the exchequer's father, with a vigour of mind that did him the highest honour, foreseeing that the French were engaged in preparations for war, sent directions to seize on a number of their merchant ships; which he publicly sold, together with their cargoes, previous to any declaration of hostilities. The act was in itself illegal: — for peace still existed between England and France. Yet, the kingdom resounded with applause of his conduct. But, nevertheless, as the nation respected justice, the value of the vessels confiscated, as well as of their freights, was restored to the owners, though the sum exceeded six hundred thousand pounds."

I have accurately recorded the outline of Townsend's speech, not only because it appeared to condense a greater portion of sound intelli-

gence than any other pronounced on that evening, but as it might be esteemed his dying opinion. He survived its delivery only a very few weeks. Jekyll replaced him, as one of the representatives for Calne. At this point of the debate Pitt rose, and in the course of a very long speech, exhibiting prodigious powers of mind, memory, and elocution, answered the various arguments adduced; beginning with Lord Hood, and proceeding through the series of individuals who had delivered their sentiments on the occasion. I did not less admire the lucid order which pervaded his discourse, or the force of his reasoning, because I totally differed from his conclusion. He still persisted in rendering the late governor-general amenable to parliamentary enquiry; nor would Pitt listen to the proposition of weighing his great public services against his acts of power. As little could he be induced to consider the East India Directors, whose orders Hastings was bound to obey, and who had expressed the utmost satisfaction at his proceedings, as alone culpable, or just objects of prosecution. After having enumerated his offences, at the head of which Pitt placed his treatment of the Princesses of Oude, as the most criminal; he finished by declaring that "the house could not, without abandoning their own honour, the duty which

they owed their country, and the ends of public justice, fail in sending up the impeachment to the bar of the peers."

Throughout this most able effort of eloquence and talent, the minister nevertheless carefully avoided touching on two points, both of which had been forcibly stated by Alderman Townsend. The first,—namely, a restitution of the sums of money exacted from Cheyt Sing, from the Begums, and other princes of Asia,—Pitt well knew could not be, or at least never would be, made by parliament. Yet, if their seizure was an act of despotic violence and injustice, with what consistency could the house impeach the plunderer, but retain the plunder? Martin, member for Tewksbury, who always voted conscientiously, deeply impressed with the conviction, after avowing himself a friend to the impeachment, added, "If any member will move that a retribution shall be made to those persons in India from whom sums of money have been forced, I will second the *motion*." But, not a man was found in the assembly to accept the proposition. Burke and Pitt were both satisfied to punish the offender, without restoring a rupee of the many millions that he had poured into the company's treasury, by which aid India was preserved. It forms nevertheless matter of regret that such a *motion* did

never actually take place, as it must have unmasked the supporters of the prosecution, and have demonstrated that other motives, besides the mere love of justice, and abhorrence of crime, animated their exertions.

The other subject to which Pitt never alluded on that night, was the act of his father in seizing the French merchant ships, previous to the commencement of war in 1756:—the beneficial consequences of which measure, in a national point of view, were universally recognized; though it would have required a more able casuist than ever yet existed, to reconcile it with the laws of nations, or with a strict observance of our public faith. There seemed to be a strong analogy between it, and various features of Hastings's administration, where the preservation of the countries entrusted to his care obliterated every minor consideration. Major Scott, when alluding to the arbitrary treatment of the Princesses of Oude, and of other individuals, exclaimed, "No man can entertain a doubt of the pressing necessities of the Bengal government, at the time when Mr. Hastings authorized the seizure of the Begums' treasures. We had five armies in the field; each, many months in arrear. The state of the Carnatic was desperate. Not a rupee in the treasury. A French fleet and army hourly ex-



pected, while the company's existence could only be preserved by the most vigorous measures. I hope, Mr. Speaker, I am neither a ruffian, nor a robber. But, I protest, such were the circumstances, that in my opinion, a governor-general would have been justified in plundering a mosque, or in rifling a zenana!" — "That the Begums had afforded assistance to Cheyt Sing," continued Scott, "was matter of public notoriety. I have conversed with nearly thirty gentlemen, all of whom will depose to the fact, at the bar of the other house. It will there appear in proof, that we owe the preservation of India in 1782 to the seizure of those treasures." — "An honourable member has said, that he would second a *motion*, let it be made by whom it would, for affording retribution to those individuals who have been injured by Mr. Hastings. Sir, if I thought as he does, I would not wait for any man to make such a *motion*. I would move it myself:— for the British house of commons will become infamous to all posterity, the scoff and scorn of Europe, if, after impeaching Mr. Hastings for his pretended misdeeds, they basely profit by his crimes. He is accused of accumulating for the East India Company, by acts of oppression and injustice, nine millions and a half sterling. For every shilling of this ill-acquired sum,

credit has been taken by the minister who opened *the Indian budget*, (Dundas,) only two days ago. But, if the present charges are well founded, why do we not replace Cheyt Sing, who is now a fugitive, and repay him the 123 lacs of pagodas which we have taken from him? Why do we not restore to the Nabob of Oude, 130 lacs; due indeed by him to us, but of which we never could either have obtained or enforced payment, except by seizing on the treasures of the Begums? *I think these acts wise, politic, and justifiable: but if I thought otherwise, I should conceive myself as infamous as the corregidor in Gil Blas, who punished the robber for stealing a bag of doubloons, and, instead of restoring the money to its owner, appropriated it to his own use.*" This defence, however forcible, did not produce any answer either from the treasury bench, or from the opposite side of the assembly. The leaders of the prosecution never once spoke during the whole debate, Pitt having rendered it unnecessary, by taking on himself to justify and defend the proceeding. Only eighty-nine persons, of whom I was one, supported Wilkes's *motion*; while one hundred and seventy-five voted for immediately reading the *report* a second time.

*10th May.*—On the subsequent evening, this great prosecution, which will unquestionably

excite the wonder, if not awaken the indignation of posterity, was brought to its consummation in the house of commons. No discussion, and scarcely any conversation respecting it, took place. The articles having been adopted, Burke then moved "that Warren Hastings, Esquire, be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors." An address, transmitted from Bengal to the late governor-general, was read by a member in his place. It had been drawn up several months subsequent to Hastings's departure; couched in language of the highest respect for his character, public, as well as private; and exhibited the signatures of nearly six hundred officers of the British army. *Not a word was uttered in reply.* Frederic Montagu then moved "that Mr. Burke, in the name of the commons, do go to the bar of the house of lords, and impeach Warren Hastings." The question being put without a dissentient voice, Burke instantly repaired thither, attended by a great majority of the members present; where, in a solemn and impressive manner, he fulfilled his commission.

I know not where I can with more propriety than in this place, introduce an anecdote which Sir John Macpherson has frequently related to me. Having succeeded Mr. Hastings by devolution, as governor-general, he arrived in Eng-

land about three months after the impeachment of his predecessor was carried up to the house of peers. During the autumn of the year 1788, when the trial had already proceeded during a whole session in Westminster Hall, Sir John Macpherson drove out before dinner to Cane Wood near Hampstead, in order to pay his respects to the great Earl of Mansfield. That nobleman, who only a few months earlier had resigned the office of chief justice of the King's Bench, was then more than eighty-three years of age, infirm in body, and sinking in health; but still retained all the freshness, as well as the vigour, of his intellect. "I found him," said Sir John, "sitting before the door, in front of his house, and by no means free from bodily pain. He received me with the utmost politeness; conducted me into his library, where we walked up and down; conversed with me on the leading events of the day; and at last asked me, what was my opinion of Mr. Pitt? I replied, that I considered him as a great minister. 'A great minister!' answered Lord Mansfield; 'a great *young* minister you mean, Sir John. What did he intend by impeaching Mr. Hastings, or suffering him to be impeached?'—'He meant,' said I, 'as I apprehend, to let Justice take her course.'—'Justice! sir,' rejoined Lord Mansfield. 'Pray, where did he find her?

Where is she?"—"If you, my lord," returned I, 'do not know where to find Justice, who have been dispensing her favours these fifty years, how can any man attempt it?'—"Yes, sir," answered he, 'that is justice between man and man. All which is thus done, is well done. It is terminated. *Criminal* Justice I can understand. But, *political* Justice; where is she? What is she? What is her colour? Sometimes she is black. Sometimes she is red too. No! Sir John, Mr. Pitt is *not* a great minister. He is a great *young* minister. He will live to repent allowing Mr. Hastings to be impeached. *He has made a precedent which will, some future day, be used against himself. Mr. Pitt is only a great young minister.*'"—When we reflect that within eighteen years from the period at which this conversation took place, Lord Melville beheld himself placed in the same predicament with Hastings;—if we further consider how deeply Pitt was involved in, and how acutely he felt his friend's disaster,—a disaster which unquestionably combined with other causes to accelerate his own end, scarcely nine months afterwards;—we shall see just reason to admire the depth of Lord Mansfield's discernment. Sir John Macpherson relating the circumstance, some years afterwards, in a company where Lord Thurlow and he met at dinner; "You

need not tell us, Sir John," observed Thurlow, with his characteristic austerity of voice and manners, "*who* uttered those words. Neither you, nor any one else, could have invented them. Lord Mansfield only could have pronounced them. He was a surprizing man. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, he was right in his opinions or decisions. And when once in a hundred times he was wrong, ninety-nine men out of a hundred could not discover it. He was a wonderful man!"

14th May.—The insinuation thrown out by Courtenay, during the debate relative to Hastings's impeachment, when he denominated Lord Hood a *spectator* of the naval victory gained by Rodney over De Grasse, was not of a nature to be treated with contemptuous silence. Nor could it be considered as a mere error arising from haste, a lapse of the tongue. Courtenay's character, and his style of elocution, satirical, cynical, ironical, full of wit, and unrestrained by delicacy, or even by decency, forbad the supposition. In point of fact, Admiral Hood was prevented by the failure of wind, from taking the same active personal share in the glorious contest of that day which fell to the commander-in-chief. He had been even obliged during a considerable time, however reluctantly, to look on, while the "Formidable"

encountered and captured the "Ville de Paris." But his intrepidity, skill, and distinguished services, placed him in the first rank of those whom his country would have selected for her champions on the ocean. Seeing Courtenay seated opposite him, near Fox, Lord Hood rose therefore, and in few words animadverted, without warmth, on the expression used; of which he desired an explanation, as it seemed to imply that he had not done his duty on the 12th of April 1782. Windham and Burke successively coming forward to Courtenay's aid, endeavoured to demonstrate that he had unintentionally used the term *spectator*, instead of *participator*; and they not only united in recognitions of the admiral's valour, as well as high professional character, but they likewise joined in protesting the deep concern privately expressed to them by Courtenay himself, at the act of inadvertence which he had committed. Pitt was not, however, to be so satisfied. After stating the astonishment and indignation which, he said, in common with the whole house, he felt at the bare suspicion of any imputation being thrown on his noble friend; and urging Courtenay to make that apology in public, which, it appeared, he had already done in private; the chancellor of the

exchequer added, "I will give him an opportunity for once of saying whether he is serious or not. The *motion* which I shall submit is, first, that the vote of thanks given to Lord Hood on the memorable victory in question be read; and afterwards, that it be reprinted in the Votes of the present day."

An altercation now took place between Pitt and Fox; the latter not venturing to oppose the minister's *motion*, which, he even said, he was ready to support; remarking at the same time that he had, when secretary of state in 1782, moved these thanks of the house to Lord Hood. But, while he conceded this point, he endeavoured to shelter Courtenay; partly, as having already declared that he meant nothing derogatory to the honour of the admiral; partly, on account of the *unconciliatory* manner in which the chancellor of the exchequer pressed for a public reparation. Courtenay, during the progress of a discussion which regarded himself far more than Lord Hood, observed a pertinacious silence; though Pitt endeavoured to rouse him by the severity of his animadversions. "I did not intend," observed the minister, "to be *conciliatory* in any of my remarks, because I conceived that feelings of delicacy and propriety would produce from



himself the apology which his friends have already made for him."

Finding, nevertheless, that his sarcasms, however pointed, could not produce the effect of extorting a recantation from Courtenay, Pitt contented himself with putting the *motion* which he had announced to the vote. It passed unanimously, and was immediately followed by an adjournment. But, the concession refused by Courtenay to ministerial importunity, he made spontaneously on the following day. Rising unexpectedly, he did ample justice to Lord Hood's public character and services; protesting that he never had designed to throw any reflection on a man who stood so deservedly high in the estimation of his country. At the moment, however, that he performed this act of reparation, he accompanied it with reflections of the bitterest description on the chancellor of the exchequer; who, he said, had precluded him from doing it by the acrimonious solicitations of the preceding evening. "Solicitations," added Courtenay, "conveyed with his usual felicity of expression, and insidiousness of intention; urged with affected candour, and studied plausibility!" Pitt heard these ebullitions of vexation without making any reply, and the affair terminated; Courtenay having displayed as much firmness,

or rather pertinacity, throughout the progress of the business, as he had shewn indiscretion in its commencement.

It might have been imagined that Burke, having carried to the bar of the upper house so many articles of impeachment against Hastings, would limit his future exertions to adducing the proofs of these asserted crimes. But, precisely at this time, he brought forward a new, multifarious, complex accusation, branching out into many heads, denominated "Misdemeanors committed in Oude." He said little in explanation of them; and the question being put upon the charge, it was carried without either debate or division, though not wholly without observation. "I do not mean to divide the house," said Major Scott, "because, as a friend of the late governor-general, I wish that the charge now made may go up to the lords; conscious as I am, that where criminality is asserted, merit will eventually appear."—"We agree, indeed, as to the distress existing in the province of Oude; but we wholly differ relative to the cause, which Mr. Hastings's enemies think proper to attribute to *him*. I, who have resided in Oude, know that he foretold the destructive consequences of the system established by his colleagues, who then formed the majority in the supreme council. Mr. Has-

tings has the exclusive merit of alleviating the evils which *they, not he*, occasioned. I rejoice, therefore, that a charge so destitute of foundation, or of common sense, should pass ; but, as a member of parliament, 'I maintain it to be wholly contrary to fact.' Dempster supported Scott's assertion ; declaring it altogether unworthy of the house, to adopt such loose, unproved allegations, as matter of impeachment. Pitt and Dundas remained nevertheless silent, and the *report* being immediately made, the article was referred to the secret committee of managers, to be by them prepared for insertion in the list of criminal charges presented at the bar of the peers.

*15th—28th May.*—The session, which now approached its close, though it had not yet lasted four months, seemed likely to terminate with tranquillity, when Mr. Grey unexpectedly brought forward an enquiry relative to asserted abuses committed in the department of the post-office. The Earl of Tankerville and Lord Carteret jointly filled the employment of postmasters-general in 1787. Disputes arising between them, the former nobleman received his dismissal. Being of an impetuous temper, and conceiving himself ill-treated by Pitt, he induced Grey, with whom he was connected by consanguinity, to espouse his cause ; or ra-

ther, to adopt his resentments. They were ostensibly levelled against his late colleague, whom he accused of certain official acts, commonly denominated *jobs*; which might with justice be deemed irregular and improper, but which could hardly merit to be stigmatized as in any degree corrupt. Lord Carteret was not, however, in fact the real object of attack. Grey, who looked higher than the post-office, directed all his censures against the minister. Throughout the whole discussion, which continued at intervals almost down to the prorogation, Grey displayed great ability, but still greater acrimony. Towards Pitt he displayed a personal animosity, which he seemed scarcely able to restrain; and which impelled him to violate the forms of the house, on more than one occasion. Not content with answering the chancellor of the exchequer's arguments, Grey proceeded to analyze his motives; adding in a tone of defiance, that "no man should *dare* to question the purity of those principles by which he was actuated." If, in throwing out such a menace, he hoped or expected to intimidate his antagonist, he speedily found out his error. Pitt, though his consummate judgment enabled him with singular felicity to avoid expressions necessarily productive of personal collision, yet scarcely ever receded, apo-

logized, or betrayed any apprehension of consequences. He might rather perhaps be censured as too unbending and unaccommodating, than accused of consulting his individual safety, by the slightest inclination to concede, unless from the dictates of reason and conviction. His spirit always sustained and animated his eloquence. I never knew any public man who appeared more prompt to defend with the pistol, whatever opinion he had uttered, or assertion he had made, sometimes even contrary to the rules of debate, as Tierney experimentally proved, many years subsequent to these transactions.

“The honourable gentleman,” observed Pitt, addressing his reply to Grey, “arrogates somewhat too much to himself, if he imagines that I shall not take the liberty of calling his motives in question, as often as I am warranted in so doing by his conduct. If he wishes not to have his motives questioned, he must take care so to regulate his conduct, as to render it unnecessary.” Grey replying, that “if any person imputed to him dishonourable principles, he knew the means to which it would become him to resort;” Sheridan interposed, with a view of moderating the asperity of the two parties; declaring that his friend had mistaken the chancellor of the exchequer’s meaning. But Pitt.

calmly rising a second time, repeated deliberately all that he had previously said ; adding, " As to the means which the honourable member may think proper to use, it will rest with himself to determine that point." He could not treat Grey's threat with more dignified disregard. A variety of extraneous matter, which found its way into the debates that arose out of the attack upon the post-office, served to exhibit the animosity of the contending parties. Fox ventured, not indeed positively, but indirectly, to accuse the chancellor of the exchequer with having courted Lord North's friendship in 1782, after that nobleman's resignation. Such a charge, if it had been founded in truth, must have rendered Pitt liable to the imputation of gross insincerity, or rather of deliberate falsehood. He denied it, not with anger or indignation, but in language of energy, simplicity, and brevity, which left no doubt on the mind of any impartial man how totally destitute of reality was the accusation. " I appeal," exclaimed Pitt, " to all those persons who have witnessed my conduct ever since my first appearance in this house, whether I have not invariably declared that I thought the noble lord a bad minister, and that I never would act with him as a member of the cabinet. At the same time, I no more believe him to have been actu-

ated by motives of personal corruption, than does the right honourable gentleman." Never was any insinuation, or rather calumny, more triumphantly repelled! Fox himself felt it to be so untenable, that he did not attempt to maintain its validity.

Foiled in their effort to wound the minister through Lord North, his assailants endeavoured to attain their object by dragging Lord Hawkesbury's name into the debate. It had indeed been in contemplation, to appoint that nobleman joint postmaster-general with Lord Carteret, after the Earl of Tankerville's dismissal; but, on the revival of the board of trade, which Burke's bill of reform extinguished in 1782, and which institution Pitt renewed at this time, Lord Hawkesbury was placed at its head, as president. No individual in the kingdom, even his enemies admitted, could have been selected with more propriety, to perform the duties of the situation. Fox, nevertheless, availing himself of a name so unpopular, in order, as he hoped, to throw an odium on the chancellor of the exchequer; "Can any man wonder," observed he, "that the noble earl should have been suddenly dismissed, when it was intended to replace him by an individual against whose interest a whole administration does not weigh a feather? I mean, the first lord of the new

board of trade." Grey, when speaking on the same subject, made use of still more personal language. "My noble relative," said he, "has been sacrificed, in order to make official arrangements for a member of the other house, who placed the minister in his present elevation, and whose nod can dismiss him from employment." These insulting reflections, not less pointed against the king than injurious to Pitt, made no impression on the chancellor of the exchequer. He neither stood in awe of Jenkinson, nor sustained himself by such assistance. Parliament, and the country, aided by his name, character, and talents, *made* him minister to George the Third. His opponents, by their imprudence, *kept* him in his office, even more than his own services or abilities. In his treatment of Hastings, he did not hesitate to act in contradiction both to the wishes of the sovereign, and of Lord Hawkesbury. So little was he "a puppet played on by invisible wires," as Fox and Burke had formerly described Lord North. Unmoved by Grey's accusations, after disproving the assertion that Lord Tankerville had been turned out in order to make room for Lord Hawkesbury, Pitt calmly added, "Gentlemen may allude as frequently as they think proper, to the last-mentioned peer, so long as I am persuaded that



every favour conferred on him by the crown has been fully earned by the most meritorious public services."

Burke, whose time and exertions were concentrated on the prosecution of Hastings, took no active part in Grey's enquiry ; but Sheridan amply compensated for it, by his indefatigable attendance, and brilliant sallies. Wit constituted his never-failing weapon. Pitt, while he candidly admitted that abuses existed in the department of the post-office, which demanded reform, maintained that no remissness on the part of government retarded or prevented the application of a proper remedy. He had in fact, for the express purpose, induced parliament to appoint commissioners empowered to make every necessary investigation, and armed with full powers for attaining the object. Sir John Dick, and Mr. Francis Baring, two men of acknowledged ability, occupied the principal seats at the board. The latter, who then sat in the house as member for Grampound, and whom Pitt raised to the baronetage about six years later, was not only present in his place, but took part in the debate. He possessed a head admirably organized for calculations of arithmetic, or of finance, though he laboured under a defect of hearing ; while Sir John Dick, retaining his faculties undiminished, was yet

far advanced in life. They had already examined various of the public offices, had reported on their state, had detected many abuses, and in the course of their labours, it was known that they would speedily arrive at the post-office. All these circumstances were fully exposed by the chancellor of the exchequer, as constituting his best exculpation against Grey's attack. But Sheridan, with great ingenuity, endeavoured to prove, that the commissioners were utterly incompetent to the execution of their trust. "It appears, indeed," added he, "that the minister voluntarily surrendered his understanding, when he brought in the *bill* by which they were appointed; and determined thenceforward to see only with the eyes of Sir John Dick, and to hear only with the ears of Mr. Baring." The effect of this allusion received no slight augmentation from the presence of Baring himself, who, though seated near Sheridan, did not hear it, till the peals of laughter which it occasioned conveyed to him the information.

Sheridan's triumph did not, however, extend beyond the risible faculties of his audience. Pitt suffered no depreciation in the opinion of the house, or of the public. Fox himself, while he strongly supported Grey, secretly disapproved of the whole proceeding. He felt that

such petty heads of accusation were unworthy the serious notice of parliament, and could not form grave matter of criminal enquiry against ministers. He neither attempted to conceal that he so thought, nor did he hesitate to declare, that though he should vote for the question, he had not recommended bringing it forward ; because he did not consider it to be of a size proportioned to Mr. Grey's character, and his importance in that assembly. On Lord Hawkesbury he exhausted the utmost severity of animadversion. " This day," exclaimed he, " is the first on which the minister has publicly panegyricized the noble lord's merits. In the hour of contest, his name was studiously concealed. But I deny his title to applause. If we except those parts of his conduct which he himself has uniformly disclaimed and disavowed, but which we know to be true, his public life exhibits as few acts of meritorious service as any individual throughout the king's dominions." This censure has always appeared to me severe ; for, though we may readily admit that Jenkinson's talents alone, if they had been unaided by Lord Bute's patronage, and subsequently by royal favour, would not probably have elevated him to the British peerage ; and though he was, during many years, one of the most unpopular or obnoxious subjects in either

house of parliament; yet his extensive information, application to business, deep knowledge of commercial affairs, and laborious researches on every topic connected with national wealth or revenue, placed him very high in the list of practical statesmen. Eden, who possessed similar endowments, and who was only a baronet's younger son, yet made his way up to the house of peers, as well as Jenkinson. Grey's *motion*, which rather implied than expressed a censure on administration for not having reformed the abuses in the post-office, was extinguished without coming to a division. The whole enquiry manifested more spleen, if not enmity, than it exhibited any real ground of accusation; and Grey's eloquence excited greater admiration, than either his display of judgment, or command of temper.

21st — 24th May. — The Prince of Wales's pecuniary embarrassments, which, when first agitated, had occasioned so much acrimonious discussion, terminated with an expression of general consent, amidst testimonies of universal satisfaction. Not an allusion was made either by Rolle, or from any other quarter, to the lady who formed the object of his attachment. A royal message having been sent, expressive of his majesty's very great concern at the debt incurred by his son, of which the particulars were

laid on the table; a most loyal address followed, without a dissentient voice. Pitt alone spoke, neither Fox nor Sheridan uttering a word. His royal highness consented to adopt a system of payment which, it was asserted, would effectually prevent the accumulation of new incumbrances. The minister, on his part, expressed a confident hope that no severe scrutiny would be made into the nature of the account presented, "as the circumstance itself could never occur a second time." Finally, the king consented and directed that ten thousand pounds a year should be paid to the heir-apparent, in addition to his preceding allowance of fifty thousand pounds. But as this augmentation of income, though it might enable him to subsist without incurring new debts, could not possibly discharge those already contracted, two sums were voted for the express purpose. The first, amounting to one hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds, was destined to pay the prince's numerous creditors. Twenty thousand pounds were ordered to be issued on account of the works carrying on at Carlton-house; the architectural embellishments of which edifice, it was understood, would swallow up more than double that sum before they could be completed.

Ample as the aggregate donation might be considered, it was not in any degree commen-

surate with the prince's wants, nor did it satisfy the expectations of his adherents. They wished to procure for him a much larger income from parliament. Four years earlier, in 1783, when Fox filled the office of secretary of state, he did not hesitate to declare, speaking from the treasury bench officially, that he would have made the annual allowance to the heir-apparent one hundred thousand pounds, if his majesty would have consented. The relief extended to the prince on the present occasion produced in fact no permanent benefit. His royal highness resumed indeed, for a time, his household, and officers of state: but, as no system or principles of economy pervaded his general mode of life, while his embarrassments rapidly accumulated, in the course of a few years the interposition and aid of parliament became again necessary (notwithstanding the minister's assurances to the contrary) for his extrication.

Among the persons of high rank whom the Prince of Wales distinguished by his particular intimacy at this period, and in whose society he passed many of his hours, may be enumerated my friends the Earl and Countess of Clermont. They were both in the decline of life. I have scarcely ever known a man more fitted for a companion of kings and queens, than was Lord Clermont. Nature had formed

his person in an elegant mould, uniting delicacy of configuration with the utmost bodily activity, the soundest constitution, and uninterrupted health. When he was near sixty-five, while on a shooting party,—I think, in Norfolk,—the Prince of Wales, who was one of the company, had the misfortune to wound him with small shot, in several places. Lord Clermont suffered, however, only a short temporary confinement in consequence of the accident. His royal highness, not long afterwards, made him a gentleman of the bed-chamber. His manners, easy, quiet, calm, yet lively and ingratiating, never varied. Endowed with great suavity and equality of temper, possessing a very ample fortune, almost a stranger to bodily indisposition, and having no issue male or female, he enjoyed every hour of human life. Descended from a branch of the antient and noble family of Fortescue, he had been successively raised to the Irish dignities of a baron, viscount, and earl. Such was his passion for *the turf*, that when menaced by his father to be disinherited if he did not quit *Newmarket*, he refused; preferring rather to incur the severest effects of paternal indignation, than to renounce his favourite amusement. His understanding was of the common order; but, though his whole life had been passed in the sports of the field, or

among jockeys, yet he wanted not refinement; and he used to shelter himself under Horace's

*"Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum,"*

when justifying his ardour for races. Having mixed in the highest circles during near fifty years, both in this country and on the Continent, he had collected much original, as well as curious information.

Inhabiting, as Lord Clermont did, a splendid house in Berkeley-square; maintaining a table at once delicate and luxurious; choice in the selection of his wines, and in every accompaniment of taste or opulence; the Prince of Wales used frequently to make one of the number of his guests. He enjoyed, indeed, the privilege of sending at his pleasure to Lord Clermont, of commanding a dinner, and naming the persons to be invited of both sexes:—a permission, of which his royal highness often availed himself. Notwithstanding so close a connexion as he maintained with the heir-apparent, yet few noblemen were better received at St. James's; and scarcely any were detained a longer time in conversation by his majesty, whenever he appeared at the drawing-room. Nor was he less acceptable at the court of Versailles, where he and Lady Clermont repaired almost every year; and where they were admitted to all the parties made by the Duchess de Polignac, for the



amusement of the queen. The very title of *Clermont*, which he assumed when raised to the peerage,—and which might be esteemed factitious, as no such *place*, I believe, existed in Ireland,—assimilated him to the blood royal of France; a younger branch of the illustrious line of Condé having been denominated *Comtes de Clermont*. Probably he was not oblivious of this fact, in his selection of the title.

When about eighty-four, he breathed his last, in September 1806, at Brighthelmstone, scarcely a fortnight after Charles Fox expired at Chiswick. They always lived much together, especially during the autumnal season; as Fox usually visited Norfolk, in order to enjoy the amusement of shooting, among his friends. Lord Clermont possessed a seat in that part of the kingdom, for the same purpose. I well remember an extraordinary bet which he made with Fox and Lord Foley, for a hundred guineas; namely, that he would find a heifer which should eat twenty stone of turnips in twenty-four hours. He won the wager. I said that he *breathed his last* at eighty-four; an expression peculiarly fitted to express the mode of his death:—for he was carried off by no specific disease, nor suffered any pain, unless it were intellectual. An augmenting weakness and extenuation, which left undiminished all his fa-

culties, senses, and powers of conversation, gently conveyed, or rather, wafted him out of life. I was accustomed very frequently to dine with him, in a small society of select friends, till within five or six weeks of his decease; and, though then evidently wasting away, yet at table he soon became animated. Even his memory remained fresh, and he bore no resemblance to Swift's *Struldbrugs*.

The Countess of Clermont was formed, like her lord, for the atmosphere of a court. Endowed with no superior talents, though possessing a cultivated mind; her manners subdued, yet exempt from servility; with an agreeable person, but destitute of beauty; uniting consummate knowledge of the world to constitutional serenity of temper; she displayed almost every qualification calculated to retain, as well as to acquire, royal favour. The Prince of Wales professed and exhibited towards her a species of filial regard. All his notes addressed to her displayed equal affection and confidence. As Lady Clermont enjoyed so distinguished a place in Marie Antoinette's esteem, it was natural that she should endeavour to transfuse into the prince's mind feelings of attachment and respect for the French queen, similar to those with which she was herself imbued. Making allowance for the difference of sexes,

there seemed to be indeed no inconsiderable degree of resemblance between their dispositions. Both were indiscreet, unguarded, and ardent devotees of pleasure. But the Duke of Orleans, irritated at her successful opposition to the marriage of his daughter with the Count d'Artois' eldest son, had already prepossessed the Prince of Wales in her disfavour. He was accustomed to speak of her, on the duke's report, as a woman of licentious life, who changed her lovers according to her caprice. She, indignant at such imputations, which soon reached her, expressed herself in terms the most contemptuous, respecting the heir-apparent; whom she characterized as a voluptuary enslaved by his appetites, incapable of any energetic or elevated sentiments. About this time, Count Fersen, then the Swedish envoy at the court of France, who was well known to be highly acceptable to Marie Antoinette, visited London; bringing letters of introduction from the Duchess de Polignac, to many persons of distinction here, and in particular, for Lady Clermont. Desirous to show him the utmost attention, and to present him in the best company, soon after his arrival she conducted him in her own carriage to Lady William Gordon's assembly, in Piccadilly, one of the most distinguished in the metropolis. She had

scarcely entered the room, and made Count Fersen known to the principal individuals of both sexes, when the Prince of Wales was announced. I shall recount the sequel in Lady Clermont's own words to me, only a short time subsequent to the fact.

“ His royal highness took no notice of me on his first arrival; but, in a few minutes afterwards, coming up to me, ‘ Pray, Lady Clermont,’ said he, ‘ is that man whom I see here Count Fersen, the queen’s favourite?’—‘ The gentleman,’ answered I, ‘ to whom your royal highness alludes, is Count Fersen; but, so far from being a favourite of the queen, he has not yet been presented at court.’—‘ God d—n me!’ exclaimed he, ‘ you don’t imagine I mean *my mother*?’—‘ Sir,’ I replied, ‘ whenever you are pleased to use the word *queen* without any addition, I shall always understand it to mean *my queen*. If you speak of any other queen, I must entreat that you will be good enough to say the queen of France, or of Spain.’ The prince made no reply; but, after having walked once or twice round Count Fersen, returning to me, ‘ He’s certainly a very handsome fellow,’ observed he. ‘ Shall I have the honour, sir,’ said I, ‘ to present him to you?’ He instantly turned on his heel, without giving me any answer; and I soon afterwards quitted Lady

William Gordon's house, carrying Count Fersen with me. We drove to Mrs. St. John's, only a few doors distant, who had likewise a large party on that evening. When I had introduced him to various persons there, I said to him, 'Count Fersen, I am an old woman, and infirm, who always go home to bed at eleven. You will, I hope, amuse yourself. Good night.' Having thus done the honours as well as I could, to a stranger who had been so highly recommended to me, I withdrew into the anti-chamber, and sate down alone in a corner, waiting for my carriage. While there, the prince came in; and I naturally expected, after his recent behaviour, that he would rather avoid than accost me. On the contrary, advancing up to me, 'What are you doing here, Lady Clermont?' asked he.—'I am waiting for my coach, sir,' said I, 'in order to go home.'—'Then,' replied he, 'I will put you into it, and give you my arm down the stairs.'—'For heaven's sake, sir,' I exclaimed, 'don't attempt it! I am old, very lame, and my sight is imperfect. The consequence of your offering me your arm will be, that in my anxiety not to detain your royal highness, I shall hurry down, and probably tumble from the top of the staircase to the foot.'—'Very likely,' answered he; 'but, if you tumble, I shall tumble with you. Be as-

sured, however, that I will have the pleasure of assisting you, and placing you safely in your carriage.' I saw that he was determined to repair the rudeness with which he had treated me at Lady William Gordon's, and I therefore acquiesced. He remained with me till the coach was announced, conversed most agreeably on various topics, and as he took care of me down the stairs, enjoined me at every step not to hurry myself. Nor did he quit me when seated in the carriage, remaining uncovered on the steps of the house till it drove off from the door." I have recounted this anecdote at more length than it may seem to merit, because, trifling as are the circumstances which compose it, they prove how gracefully the Prince of Wales could redeem an error. Louis the Fourteenth himself was not his superior in all the external attributes of a king that depend on manner; though in personal majesty, and the fine bodily proportions which constitute manly dignity of form, the prince could sustain no competition with the son of Anne of Austria.

*28th May.*—I have already stated that Burke brought up, towards the middle of May, a new article of impeachment against Hastings, denominated "Misdemeanors in Oude." Before the session closed, he re-produced this charge, multiplied by the committee into twelve sepa-

rate heads of accusation. The house was altogether ignorant of their nature or import. They were nevertheless immediately adopted, without discussion of any kind. Major Scott did not, however, allow them to pass without a severe, though ineffectual animadversion. "I will venture to assert," said he, "that not ten members of this assembly have read the articles, as they were not printed before the hour of one on the present day. We are, therefore, now about to proceed to the most solemn judicial act which we can execute, without knowing one word about the matter. If gentlemen would only peruse these charges, they never could declare seriously at the bar of the other house, that they, in behalf of themselves, and of the commons of England, present such trash as articles of impeachment. I am told that I ought to have made my opposition three days ago, when these charges were virtually, though not formally voted: but if so, what, in heaven's name, did we mean by ordering them to be printed! I have performed my duty, Mr. Speaker, in exposing so disgraceful a proceeding. Since, however, it is thought consistent with our dignity thus to proceed, I will not divide the house upon it." This appeal produced no effect. Neither Pitt nor Burke made any reply, and the charges were unanimously adopted. Two days

afterwards, on the 30th of May, the prorogation of parliament took place; his majesty noticing with sentiments of deep concern, in his speech on the occasion, the dissensions which unhappily prevailed among the states of the Dutch United Provinces. They were indeed of the most alarming description, threatening, among other calamitous consequences, the immediate subversion of the treaty of commerce recently concluded between France and England.

*October.*—In the autumn died, at Dublin, the Duke of Rutland, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, not having attained the age of thirty-four. Though he neither displayed any eminent talents or virtues, yet various circumstances conduced to give him political importance at this period of the reign of George the Third, or more properly, of Pitt's administration. His father, the celebrated Marquis of Granby, notwithstanding the attack made on him by *Junius*, and the greater misfortune which he underwent of being defended by Sir William Draper, left behind him a name dear to Englishmen. His courage, the affability of his manners, the hospitalities of his table, and the generosity of his disposition, justly acquired him universal popularity. To the Duke of Rutland, Pitt had owed his first entrance into the house of commons; and from attachment to the new minis-



ter, whom he had conduced to elevate, more than from inclination, it was supposed that he accepted the government of Ireland, in the spring of the year 1784. Never was viceroy more formed to conciliate affection throughout that convivial kingdom! Splendid in his establishment, his table presented every delicacy which luxury could accumulate or display. Vessels laden with fruit, and other expensive productions of England, came over by his direction weekly to Dublin, during the whole period of his viceroyalty. He participated largely in the festivities which he encouraged; and, like the younger Cyrus in antiquity, who, when writing to the Spartans, boasted his ability to swallow more wine without being intoxicated, than his elder brother could do, the duke might have challenged a similar superiority over most of his guests.

Play, which divided with wine his evenings, had impaired his ample fortune, previous to his visiting Ireland. Nor, though united by marriage to the most beautiful woman in England, was he insensible to the seductions of beauty in others. A syren of that period, the magic of whose voice was at least equalled by her personal attractions, — I mean Mrs. Billington, — held him for some time in her chains. Excesses of various kinds precipitated his end. A short

time before his decease, he quitted Dublin, in order to make a progress through various parts of the island, being entertained on his way at the seats of the nobility and gentry. During the course of this tour, he invariably began the day by eating at breakfast six or seven turkey's eggs, as an accompaniment to tea or coffee. He then rode forty, and sometimes fifty miles; dined at six or at seven o'clock, after which he drank very freely; and concluded by sitting up to a late hour, always supping before he retired to rest. On his return to Dublin he was seized, as might have been anticipated, with a fever of so violent a nature as to baffle all medical skill. The Duchess of Rutland, whose health was likewise considerably impaired by the dissipation of a winter passed in the Irish capital, had visited England for the purpose of consulting Warren, then the most eminent physician in London. While living in great seclusion at her mother the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort's house, in Berkeley-square, intelligence arrived of the duke her husband's dangerous, if not desperate situation. She immediately prepared to join him, and Warren actually set out for the purpose. But, before he could reach Bangor, on his way to Holyhead, he received information that the duke was no more; his blood having become so highly inflamed, as to render

ineffectual all the remedies administered for his relief.

The Marquis of Buckingham, who had already filled the office of lord-lieutenant under the Earl of Shelburne's administration, was again selected for the same employment. He possessed far superior ability, as well as greater application to business, than his predecessor: but these qualities formed no compensation for the festivities to which the Irish had been accustomed under their late ruler. Temperance invariably presided at the repasts of the marquis. Mr. Fitzherbert, whose diplomatic talents had been employed at Paris during the negotiations which preceded the peace of 1783, replaced Mr. Orde, as secretary for Ireland. Like Orde, Fitzherbert has attained the British peerage; an elevation which he has reached less by eminent ability or distinguished services while resident as minister at Petersburg, or at Madrid, than in consequence of his consummate prudence, accompanied with cautious, guarded, quiet, polished manners. These qualities have associated him to the private hours and recreations of Buckingham House. Scarcely any individual about the court during the last twenty years has been admitted to such habits of intimate communication with the king and queen, as Lord St. Helen's. Even down to the month

of May 1818, when her late majesty's augmenting maladies incapacitated her for any longer receiving a numerous company, he never failed to form one of her select evening party. I have always inclined to consider Lord St. Helen's as superior in intellect to any of the chosen few constantly received at the queen's house, or at Windsor. The late Earl of Cardigan, the present Earl of Arran, Lord Henley, and Mr. Arthur Stanhope, who participated the distinction, could enter into no competition with him. Lord Walsingham might indeed be regarded as his equal in mental endowments, and of manners alike subdued. The persons whom I have enumerated, were among the principal courtiers admitted to the card-table of Charlotte of Mecklenburg. Similar qualifications recommended the ladies who enjoyed that distinction. At their head might be placed Mrs. Howe, who, when near fourscore, obeyed the summons with the alacrity of youth, on the very shortest notice. She enjoyed the privilege of expressing her opinion without reserve, and was always treated by the king with extraordinary familiarity; more, indeed, as a relative, than as a common visitant. Mrs. Howe, who was a grand-daughter of George the First, continued to wear the female *costume* of his reign, at the close of the eighteenth century; and her figure,

cast in a Westphalian mould, baffled all description.

I return to the Duke, or rather, to the Duchess of Rutland. It is not sufficient merely to say that she was the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, of high rank. Her person, in symmetry, elegance, and dignity, outstripped all rivalry. Grace itself formed her limbs, and accompanied her movements. She was tall, of a just height; slender, yet by no means thin; combining in her figure the variety of points that Apelles is supposed to have sought throughout Greece. I have conversed with a lady who had seen her, not indeed in the state that Paris beheld the goddesses on Mount Ida; but so much undressed, that the description reminded me of Thomson's *Musidora*. She assured me that no words could convey an adequate idea of Lady Mary Somerset's formation:—for it happened previous to her marriage. Her features were noble, yet delicate; and the Plantagenets could not have been represented by a more faultless sample of female loveliness. In this description there is neither partiality, nor exaggeration. In truth, I never contemplated her except as an enchanting statue, formed to excite admiration, rather than to awaken love; this superb production of nature not being lighted up by corresponding mental attractions.

She wanted the smiles, the amenity, the animation, the intelligence, the sweetness of the Duchess of Devonshire. She equally wanted the irresistible seduction and fascination of the Countess of Jersey. A woman of such pre-eminent charms, married to a man whose affections and time she divided with three rivals,—wine, play, and women,—could not, however, want admirers. They sprang up, as Pope says of Lady Mary Wortley, wherever she turned her eyes. The duke took umbrage at it occasionally, notwithstanding his constitutional apathy; and her coquetry or levity had produced so much inquietude in his mind, that it is said they parted on terms not the most affectionate, when she embarked for England. Anxious to withdraw him from the company with whom he was engaged at table, on a certain evening, at *the Castle*, the duchess had ventured to approach the window of the apartment, and tapped at it with her fingers. But he resented the interference in the same manner that Northerton does the affront of Tom Jones. His decrease operated, however, like Captain Blifil's, in the same novel, as “an infallible recipe for recovering the lost affections of a wife.” The duchess, after a period of grief and retirement, re-appeared with augmented attractions. I never saw her more beautiful than in the winter

of 1788. Notwithstanding the power of her charms, and the number of her followers, the duchess has never contracted a second marriage; and she still retains nearly as much beauty as Diana de Poitiers did, if we may believe Brantome, at the same period of life.

Whatever sterility pervades our internal history, during the long interval which elapsed between the prorogation of parliament, and its meeting again for the dispatch of business, is amply compensated by the magnitude and importance of the transactions that took place in the surrounding Continental states. I passed part of the autumn in Paris, where the utmost effervescence, not unmixed with gloomy apprehensions of futurity, began already to diffuse their influence over society. Never, perhaps, at any period of the French history, did the throne require to have been filled by a prince of vigour and determination, more than in 1787. Unhappily, Louis the Sixteenth wanted those qualities: but, while Vergennes survived, the defects of his character were concealed from view. The death of that minister, followed as it was by the dismissal and disgrace of Calonne, plunged the crown into embarrassments of the most complicated nature. The Archbishop of Toulouse proved himself wholly incapable of restoring confidence, or of retrieving the disorder in the

finances; and the parliament of Paris, openly sustained by the Duke of Orleans, encreased the public confusion, by pertinaciously refusing to register the new taxes. Such a state of affairs, which demanded equal wisdom and firmness in the sovereign, was rendered more critical from the peculiar circumstances of the time. The seven United Provinces, where France had established a predominant influence on the ruins of the stadtholder's authority, loudly invoked the protection of the court of Versailles. William the Fifth, Prince of Orange, whose incapacity and weaknesses had nearly annihilated the power so long exercised by his family over the republic of Holland, looked for support to England, and to Prussia. While the great Frederic filled the throne of the latter kingdom, though he interfered by his good offices, and even by his remonstrances, in favour of the stadtholder, yet he steadily withheld any military interference. His advanced age and infirmities, the faint interest which he felt in the fortunes of his niece the Princess of Orange, his predilection for France, and his estrangement from Great Britain, whose alliance he never sought, except from overruling necessity, during his whole reign;—these motives prevented him from interposing by force to check the progress of the republican party.



But his nephew, Frederic William the Second, beheld with very different emotions the insult offered to his sister, who was arrested in her own carriage, by a party of Dutch cavalry, while quietly proceeding from Nimeguen to the Hague; detained, and treated with great personal indignity. Having concerted with the English ministers his plan of operations, he did not hesitate to march an army into Holland, under the command of the Duke of Brunswick, so renowned in the "seven years' war," who advanced rapidly towards Amsterdam. The measure was bold, perhaps rash. Neither Philip the Second, nor Louis the Fourteenth, the two most powerful sovereigns who have appeared in modern Europe, if we except Napoleon, could achieve the conquest of that province, though undertaken by each with an overwhelming force. Yet Frederic William succeeded in the attempt. If Vergennes had survived, it might nevertheless have had a different issue; and Europe might have presented another history. Louis the Sixteenth wanted not the inclination to support his party, with all the power of the French monarchy. He even made demonstrations of opposing the Prussians; assembled a considerable body of troops on the frontier, not far from Liege; menaced the courts of Berlin and of London with immediate interfe-

rence, if they did not desist; issued orders to equip a fleet at Brest, as Pitt had already done at Portsmouth; and performed every act announcing hostility, except actually commencing war. But the internal weakness and financial distress of France prevented the sword from being unsheathed. The combined powers proceeded, and the Duke of Brunswic, notwithstanding all the impediments presented by the nature of the country, as well as by the resistance of the inhabitants, finally entered Amsterdam. Holland was subdued, the stadtholder replaced, and the party attached to the house of Bourbon overturned; while Louis, unable to extend assistance, looked on with reluctant acquiescence. So low had that sovereign sunk, who, not five years earlier, had almost dictated terms of peace to England, after dis severing thirteen colonies from the British empire, and compelling the restitution to Spain of Minorca, and the Floridas! Pitt rose proportionately in the scale of European estimation. His friends already boasted, rather prematurely, that he was not merely a great minister of finance; but, like his father, a statesman formed to wield, and to direct with decisive skill, the national energies in time of war. Even his enemies were silent, or joined the general applause. Such were the fortunate, though tem-

porary, results of the Prussian invasion of Holland !

Nor did the Austrian Low Countries exhibit, during the summer and autumn of 1787, events less important than the two neighbouring states. The inhabitants of those rich maritime provinces, though they no longer possessed the flourishing manufactures, nor the extensive commerce, which they carried on under the Burgundian princes, more than three centuries earlier ; yet still retained an enthusiastic love of freedom. Having been ceded by the treaties of Utrecht and of Radstadt to the German branch of the house of Austria, they had remained nearly seventy years under the mild control of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, and his daughter Maria Theresa. Both those sovereigns wisely respected the privileges of a people whose geographical position in Europe, and whose distance from the seat of government, enabled them not only to resist any act of despotism, but to invoke the aid of England, or of France, against oppression. Unrestrained by considerations which would have deterred a more prudent prince, Joseph the Second undertook to coerce the Flemings, and to extinguish their civil liberties. An attempt, in itself so unjust, he began at a period when he had already connected himself by the closest ties of

policy with Catherine the Second ; when he had accompanied her on a progress to the Crimea, and had secretly agreed, in concert with the Russian empress, to commence war upon the Turks. Joseph, who anticipated the conquest of the Ottoman provinces lying on the Lower Danube, meditated to reduce into a similar state of vassalage his subjects of Brabant and of Flanders. Previous to her decease, his mother Maria Theresa had entrusted the administration of the Netherlands, after the death of Prince Charles of Lorraine, to her favourite daughter, the Archduchess Christina ; a princess who to great personal beauty added much activity of character. With her was joined her husband, Duke Albert of Saxony, youngest of the sons of Augustus the Third, king of Poland. Under their temperate rule, notwithstanding the innovations of various kinds made by the emperor their new sovereign, in ecclesiastical, as well as in civil affairs, yet down to the close of 1786 no symptoms of insurrection manifested themselves throughout the Low Countries.

Joseph (whose whole reign of more than nine years formed a perpetual series of rash experiments ; dictated indeed, we must admit, in many instances, by benevolent or enlarged principles of action, but tinged in all with the

spirit of arbitrary power,) well knew that his sister and Duke Albert would not, without extreme reluctance, carry into execution his violent decrees. He therefore made choice of another instrument for the purpose ; and the individual whom he selected, was not a native of Germany, but an Italian. Count Belgiojoso, whom I personally knew, possessed many qualities which might justify the emperor's preference. His manners were noble, his talents considerable ; and though he loved pleasure, he could devote himself to business. A Milanese by birth, he would probably have governed that beautiful province, if it had been committed to him, equally for the benefit of his sovereign, and of the people subjected to his authority. But Belgiojoso was misplaced at Brussels. His residence of several years in England, while Austrian envoy at the court of London, had not impressed him with ideas favourable to liberty. On the contrary, he appeared to have imbibed from Lord George Gordon's riots in 1780, which scenes of outrage he witnessed, a strong prejudice against popular rights. As early as 1784, Joseph appointed him to the office of first minister of the Low Countries ; but without recalling the Archduchess and Duke Albert ; whom, more in compliance with his mother Maria Theresa's last injunctions, than

either from affection or inclination, he still allowed to retain their situations. The supreme power did not the less reside exclusively in Belgiojoso:—a fact of which the Flemings were well apprized. Under his administration, every measure of which emanated from Vienna, their affections were alienated, all their national prejudices shocked, their most antient customs abolished by edict; and the political constitution, to maintain which inviolate Joseph had sworn at his accession, was treated with disregard. Nor were instances of military violence wanting, which, though they might have inspired submission in Transylvania, or in Croatia, were calculated to excite indignation and resistance among the Flemings. Such was the position of affairs, when Joseph, returning from Cherson, prepared to commence military operations against the Ottoman Porte.

Scarcely had he reached the Austrian capital, early in July, when intelligence arrived, announcing that the states of Brabant, Flanders, and Haynault, incensed at the infraction of their charters, had suspended by their own authority all his arbitrary edicts; had refused to grant any subsidies, until the grievances of which they complained were redressed; and had virtually set the imperial power at defiance. It cannot be doubted that Joseph would instantly

have marched an army into the Low Countries, if he had not been withheld by the engagements contracted with his ally the Empress of Russia, to attack the Turks. Thus fettered, he thought proper to restrain, and to postpone his resentment. Having recalled the Archduchess and Duke Albert, he likewise ordered Belgiojoso to repair to Vienna. Finally, yielding to the urgency of the occasion, he submitted to accept the assurances of duty and loyalty made by the deputies of the Flemish states; professed a disposition to restore all the rights of their violated constitution; and, as the best proof of his sincerity, removed Belgiojoso from his employment.

Count Trautmansdorff, a German, and a man acceptable from the moderation of his character, replaced him as minister of the Netherlands. But acts of grace evidently extorted, and which under more favourable circumstances might be revoked, did not induce the insurgents to disarm, or to confide in the imperial professions. Without withdrawing their allegiance, they held themselves in readiness to resist oppression; while Joseph plunging into a war with the Turks, which covered his arms with dishonour, reserved his vengeance for a more propitious moment. That moment never arrived. His turbulent, ambitious career, pro-

ductive of incalculable injury to the house of Austria, already verged towards its termination. Happily, the conciliating, judicious conduct of his brother and successor, Leopold, pacified the discontents of the Flemings, and restored order throughout the Low Countries. Those who know that history offers a perpetual recurrence of the same events under new names, will be struck with the similarity of conduct between Philip the Second of Spain, and Joseph the Second of Austria. The same despotic, tyrannical intentions actuated both princes towards their Flemish subjects; but Joseph's principles were checked by the spirit of the eighteenth century; nor was he, like Philip, a merciless bigot. Margaret of Parma, governess of the Netherlands under the Spanish sovereign, seems to re-appear in the Archduchess Christina; as Cardinal Granvelle, Philip's minister, revives in Count Belgiojoso. So accurate is the resemblance between the two periods. If Joseph's power and revenues had equalled those of Philip, or if his life and reign had been as long protracted, we should probably have witnessed as severe and sanguinary a conflict in our own time, between the Austrian emperor and his revolted people in Flanders, as took place two hundred years earlier, under the Duke of Alva, and the Prince of Parma.



*27th November.*—Never had George the Third, during the course of seven-and-twenty years, met his parliament under circumstances so auspicious, as towards the end of November 1787! The popularity which attended his accession had speedily become obscured in consequence of his unfortunate partiality to Lord Bute, followed by the dismissal of Mr. Pitt from his councils. It underwent a still more severe eclipse at the peace of 1763, when, from causes that remain yet unexplained, — for it is impossible to solve the problem by attributing it merely to ministerial incapacity, — the most valuable acquisitions of a victorious war were restored to a vanquished enemy. Wilkes and *Junius* successively attacked his measures, and laid bare the infirmities of his character, or the errors of his government. By the convention made with Spain in 1770, though we maintained possession of the object in dispute, the Falkland Islands; yet the national honour suffered from the arrogance and insolent pretensions of the court of Madrid. During the continuance of the American contest, his majesty never opened a session without the painful necessity of disclosing some defeat, capitulation, or disgrace. Even from the peace of 1783, however meritorious, as I now think, Lord Shelburne may be esteemed for having nego-

tiated that treaty, under all the circumstances of our situation; yet the sovereign could not derive any source of pride, or of exultation. But he could say to his parliament on the present occasion, "I have effaced the faults and calamities of my past reign. If I have lost thirteen colonies, I have humbled the power by whose aid they were emancipated; and I have effected it without drawing the sword. England, which at the close of 1782 was reduced to solicit peace at Paris, has now resumed her rank among the European nations. I have, with the aid of Prussia, restored my ally the stadtholder to his antient place at the head of the Dutch republic. France, which so lately acted as the arbitress of events, torn by intestine dissensions, distressed in her finances, destitute of able ministers to direct her councils, has been reduced to witness my triumph, and her own humiliation. Contemplating these vicissitudes, and ever looking to the Divinity for support, I may exclaim,

— "Valet ima summis  
Mutare, et insignia adtenuat *Deus*,  
Obscura promens."

Such in fact, if reduced to parliamentary language, was the speech delivered at the commencement of the session. His majesty, with dignity, but void of any offensive expressions,

recapitulated the leading facts which had just taken place in Holland; the insult offered to the Princess of Orange; his own co-operation with Frederic William; the menaces used by France; the rapid success that attended the Prussian troops; finally, the mutual explanations between the courts of St. James's and of Versailles, followed by disarming their respective fleets. Pitt selected to move the address an individual who has since filled various high situations in the state, and who at this hour occupies the eminent post of lord president of the council. I mean, Mr. Ryder, now Earl of Harrowby. He was then scarcely twenty-five; but his early display of talents justified the minister's preference. A delicate constitution, precarious health, and an irritable frame of mind, have nevertheless operated throughout life to prevent his being long employed in those laborious offices of government which demand severe or unremitting exertion. It required no extraordinary eloquence or ingenuity to justify measures which had been crowned with so triumphant a result. Mr. Ryder, with becoming brevity, stated them to the house. Fox, who rose soon afterwards, admitted all their force; concurred in approving the principle which dictated our late interference in Continental affairs; claimed for himself the merit of having early

adopted it, as the uniform guide of his own political conduct, finally declaring that the substance of the address met with his sincere concurrence. While, however, he thus candidly recognized the minister's general merit in the late transactions, he did not the less repeat his own uniform denunciation of the perfidy displayed by France, in all her negotiations with foreign states. The address was carried without a dissentient voice.

Pitt had attained at this time to an almost unexampled height of ministerial favour and popularity : but he did not remain many years in that elevation. Heavy clouds soon began to collect round him ; and though they frequently seemed to disperse, yet they perpetually gathered anew, ultimately enveloping him in a dark shade, and accompanying him with aggravated gloom, to the termination of his existence. I know from persons who had most frequent access to his private hours, that after 1793, down to his decease in January 1806, he scarcely enjoyed any settled tranquillity of mind, either in or out of office. Devoured by ambition, accustomed to dictate his will to parliament, and habituated to power ever since he had attained to manhood ; incapable of finding consolation for the loss of public employment, either in marriage, or in literary re-

searches, or in cultivating his Kentish farm, or in drilling refractory Cinque Port Volunteers; embarrassed in his pecuniary circumstances, and contemplating his country engaged in a war which threatened to involve the finances, the credit, and even the independence of Great Britain, in final subversion;—the concluding thirteen years of Pitt's wonderful career present a subject of painful contemplation. Fox, if he had enjoyed a moderate independence, either hereditary or acquired, would unquestionably have formed an object of comparative envy. Inured to the privations inflicted by his acts of early imprudence, which had made him acquainted with adversity and poverty; having scarcely tasted, throughout his whole life, of political power; and emulous of attaining historical fame, if he could not reach ministerial eminence;—Fox could call into action resources denied by nature to his successful rival. He might tranquilly contemplate, from his retreat at St. Anne's Hill, the storms that shook Downing-street and Walmer Castle. He had invariably reprobated and opposed the war commenced with revolutionary France in 1793; all the disasters and calamities of which protracted struggle served to justify to himself the line of policy which he had originally embraced, and urged from the opposition bench. If I

were compelled to estimate the comparative measure of felicity enjoyed by these two illustrious statesmen, during the thirteen concluding years of their residence on earth, I should not hesitate an instant to decide it in favour of Fox. But I might be tempted to exclude the short period of about eight months which he survived his great competitor, and when he may be said to have presided in the councils of George the Third.

*December.*—Sir Elijah Impey's impeachment forms the only important event which occurred in either house of parliament previous to the Christmas recess. The chief justice of Bengal occupies indeed nearly as conspicuous a place throughout the session of 1788, as the governor-general fills during the two preceding years. But Impey by no means excites the same interest with Hastings, who possessed an elevated mind, however ambitious or even despotic may have been his administration in various instances, while invested with authority. Impey, rapacious, if not corrupt; and rendering his high office subservient to purposes of oppression, both legal and financial; seems to have had only one object constantly in view,—accumulation. The trial, condemnation, and execution of Nundcomar, are inseparably connected with his name. Sir Gilbert Elliot undertook

the laborious, as well as invidious task, of bringing forward the charges against him;—charges which he opened in a speech of no ordinary ability, well-arranged, temperate, yet full of energy. It displayed, indeed, no ray of Sheridan's wit, of Fox's impassioned and persuasive oratory, or of the classic imagery which illuminated the desultory eloquence of Burke. Sir Gilbert, possessing a solid, not a brilliant understanding; and nourishing under a cold exterior, a persevering, systematic ambition; has reached through successive gradations of employment, to a great elevation. We have beheld him appointed viceroy of a Mediterranean island, which is become unfortunately too conspicuous in the modern history of Europe, by having given birth to a man, all whose vast energies were unhappily directed to purposes of conquest, spoliation, and subversion. Expelled from Corsica, Pitt sent Sir Gilbert in a diplomatic character to Vienna. He was subsequently placed at the head of the East India Board of Control, which he quitted to assume the government-general of Bengal. On his return he was raised to the dignity of a British earl. His father, Sir Gilbert, was a man of very eminent parts. During the first sixteen years of the reign of George the Third, he successively filled various important posts about the court, or

in the state, down to the period of his decease in 1777. Few individuals enjoyed a higher degree of royal favour, or shared more largely in the unpopularity attached to the measures of Lord North's administration. His name appears in the publications of that time, joined with those of Jenkinson, Dyson, Bradshaw, and others, none of whom were embalmed in the affection of their contemporaries. To his son he bequeathed an ample patrimonial estate, while he laid the foundations of that son's political fortune.

Elliot having traced in a summary manner the principal features of Impey's legal career while in India, from the date of his first arrival at Calcutta in 1774, down to his recall by a vote of the house of commons; and having severely inveighed against the acts of tyranny or of malversation which he had authorized and committed; finished by enumerating the charges brought against him. They were six in number. At their head stood Nundcomar's murder, as Elliot denominated it;—a murder which, he said, had been performed in the most solemn and deliberate manner. The remaining articles accused him of scandalous corruption, notorious injustice, intentional infraction of the parliamentary powers under which he held and exercised his functions; lastly, subornation of



evidence ; thereby lending to falsehood the sanctity of an oath. Acts more enormous could scarcely have been attributed even to the famous chancellor of James the Second. Not a word was said in Impey's defence, from any part of the assembly, when Sir Gilbert moved to lay his *complaint* on the table. But a few days afterwards, on the 18th of December, he having proposed to refer the charges to a committee of the whole house, on the 4th of the ensuing month of February ; Pitt, while he assented to the *motion*, nevertheless observed, that from the hasty perusal which he had given to the articles, he entertained strong doubts whether the inferences drawn from the alledged facts were grounded on the principles of English law. Here terminated the discussion, an adjournment immediately taking place, up to the last day of January 1788 ; and with this event I shall close the Memoirs of my own Time for the year 1787.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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